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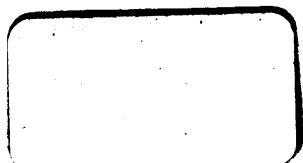
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A
KNIGHT ERRANT
IN
TURKEY

ARTHUR OAKSTONE

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**A KNIGHT-ERRANT
IN TURKEY**

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POPULAR FICTION

GERALD BISS

THE DUPE
THE WHITE ROSE MYSTERY
BRANDED

LUCAS CLEEVE

THE MASCOTTE OF PARK LANE
THE CARDINAL AND LADY SUSAN

REGINALD TURNER

DAVRAY'S AFFAIRS
UNCLE PEACEABLE

BARONESS ORCZY

BEAU BROCADE
THE TANGLED SKEIN
I WILL REPAY
THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL
A SON OF THE PEOPLE
BY THE GODS BELOVED

J. B. HARRIS-BURLAND

LOVE THE CRIMINAL
THE GOLD WORSHIPPERS
THE FINANCIER

MAY WYNNE

WHEN TERROR RULED
LET ERIN REMEMBER

CYRUS BRADY

RICHARD THE BRAZEN

HOUGHTON TOWNLEY

THE BISHOP'S EMERALDS
THE SPLENDID COWARD

JOSEPH PRAGUE

THE ABDUCTORS
VINCENZO'S VENDETTA

R. AITKEN

THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE

CLIVE PEMBERTON

THE HARVEST OF DECEIT

MARY WALPOLE

THE LOVE SEEKERS

A KNIGHT-ERRANT IN TURKEY

By
ARTHUR OAKSTONE



LONDON
GREENING & CO. LTD
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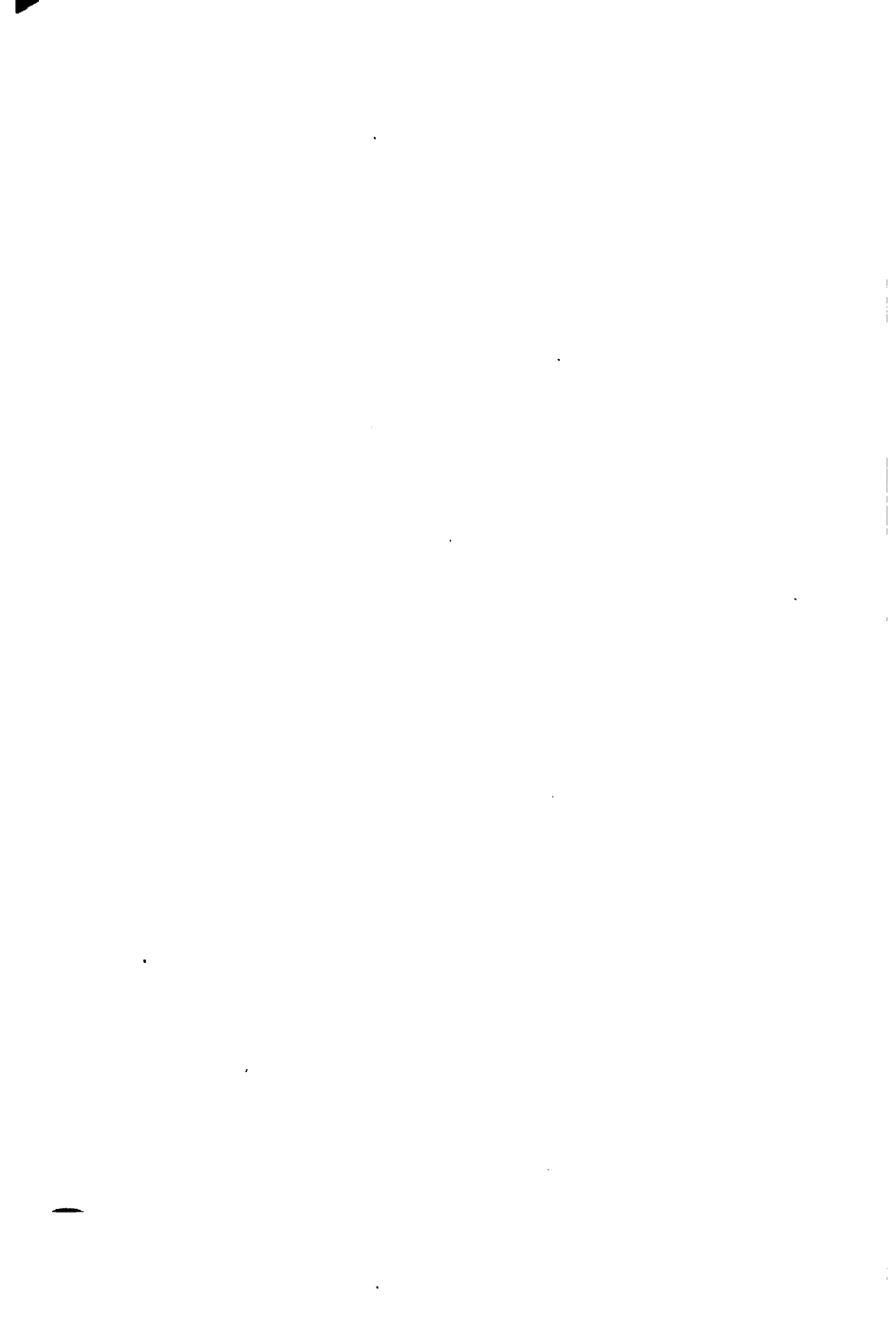
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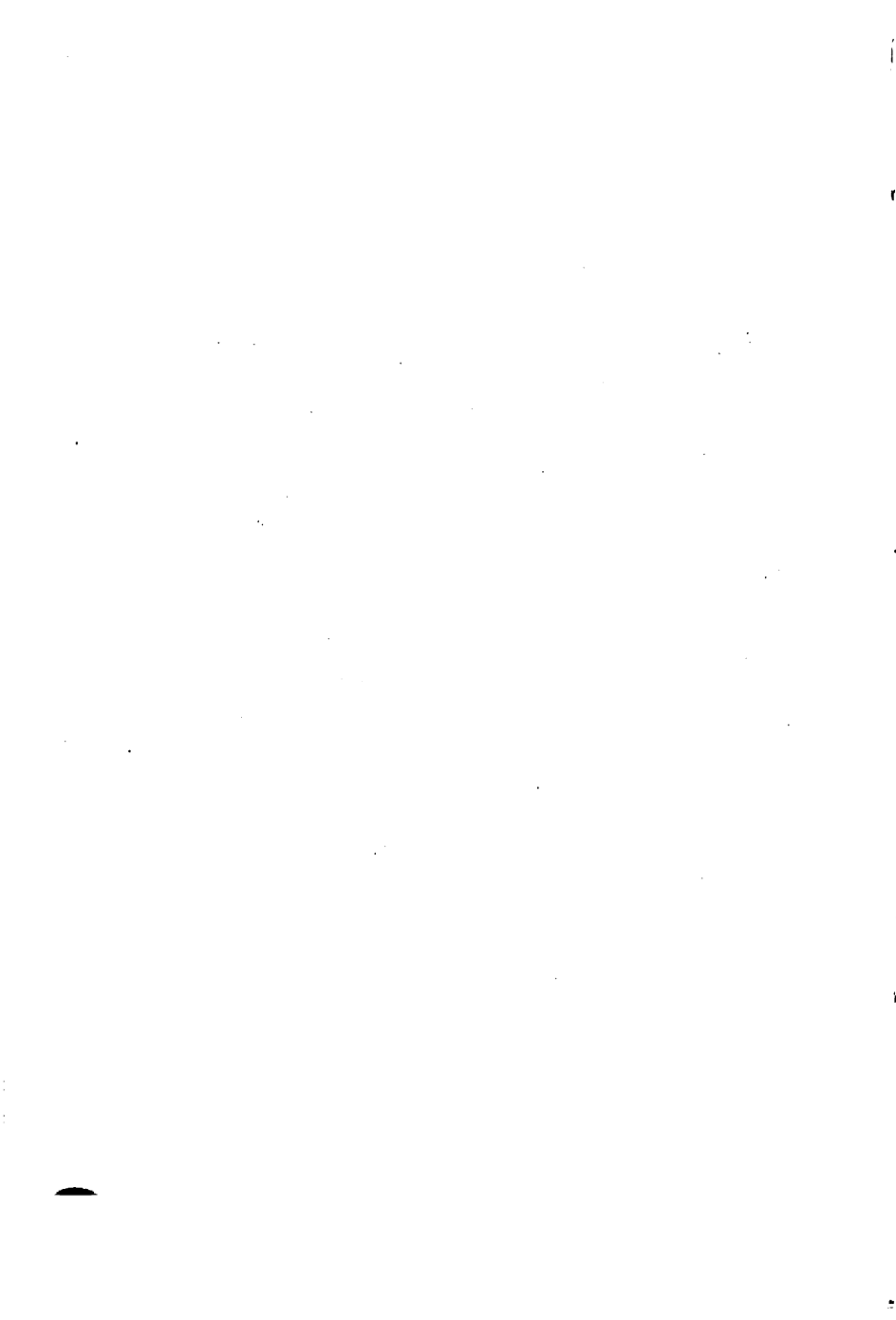
TO MY FRIEND
H. P. F.
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED



Introduction

THERE is much of truth in this little story. "Ali Effendi" is a real personage, and has numerous admirers in Turkey, where unfortunate conditions have made many men outlaws. The author has seen enough of the country to know that the descriptions of life and scenery are accurate. Though he has altered names of persons and of places, yet he is sure that any one who is acquainted with the country will be at no loss to identify them.

The author heard most of the story from the hero, and is at one with him in his admiration of the peasant Turk, and in his wonder at the natural wealth of the country. He therefore sends forth this book in the hope that it will give entertainment to the reader, and that it will awaken sympathy among Westerners for the great mass of the Turkish people, who have many noble qualities.



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CHAPTER I

AN ANGLO-AMERICAN KNIGHT-ERRANT

IT was sunset at the close of a stifling day in June, and a group of Europeans were sitting in the garden of the Sporting Club, looking out upon the beautiful quay of Smyrna. The glorious gulf stretched before them, its waters roused into motion by the *inbat*, or sea-breeze, which brings daily refreshment to the thousands of weary Levantines who resort to the club to enjoy the evenings. The bare mountains which border the gulf were painted a rich gold by the setting sun, a hue which underwent constant change as the swollen orb disappeared beneath the cool waters of the Aegean.

The group sat in silence watching the throng of pedestrians who were taking their daily promenade along the water-front, and the ever-changing, brightly coloured picture was a delight to the eye. The red fez of the Moslem or the Jew appeared here and

there, and the bright costumes of the ladies and the white suits of the gentlemen made a brilliant contrast with the darker garb of the labouring classes. Now and then the fair features of a German or English lady would attract attention; and at times the carriage of a Turkish official would glide by, with the veiled occupants peeping through their coverings upon the infidel throng.

The orchestra of the club commenced its nightly refrain, and soon, as the many lamps of café, music-garden and the quay were lit, a new world sprang into being. The dancing waters of the bay reflected the shore lights in intermittent gleams, and the rocking forms of sailing and passenger ships formed a weird background. Quiet prevailed everywhere. No shouting or singing was heard, and it was difficult to believe that some twenty thousand people were massed within an area some few yards in width and perhaps a mile in length.

Until now the group of Europeans had sat almost silent. It was pleasant and restful to have quiet and coolness, to relieve the tired brain by feasting the eyes upon the charming and changing scene, and it would have broken the spell to have talked of business or politics. But when the western sky

had ceased its magical display of colour, and the hum of voices began to drown the music of the orchestra, the men lighted their pipes or cigarettes and were soon engaged in animated conversation. Their nationalities and professions were of the most varied imaginable.

"Frightfully hot day," exclaimed a German broker, dressed in a white duck suit, who even yet was mopping his face with his handkerchief.

"Yes," replied a young Englishman, "but nothing compared with what we must expect. We have three months of heat and dust before us, with never a cloud by day or a drop of rain by night to temper the heat. Wish I could get away to England: but the 'pater' is there this year, so I must hold down his chair at the bank and sweat it out."

"Strange," an American merchant remarked, "that there are no cool places in the mountains near by, where one could go for a day or two. In any other country they would have an electric line running up to some of the peaks round the city."

"Oh! that is entirely out of the question in Turkey," observed an Austrian steamship agent, "one is hardly safe even in the suburbs of the city

Ray here tells me the Vali sent soldiers to Boudja and Bournabat yesterday, as there is a scare of brigands there."

Ray looked up on hearing his name mentioned. "Yes," he said, "last year poor Blanc was carried away at Legia, and was glad to get off by paying a thousand pounds. Lately several Armenians and Greeks have been forced to pay large ransoms; while, as for the Turks themselves, they are much worse off than the subject Christians, as one rarely hears of their losses: yet with the vast number of outlaw bands in the interior they must suffer terribly."

"The brutes are generally wise enough to let Europeans alone," a French journalist observed. "What with the railways and the mines, there are numbers of Europeans scattered about in the interior, and one never hears of them being molested. The wretches jolly well know, that if they took an Englishman or an American, an end would soon be put to their profitable business. Some say too that the Turkish officials are in league with them, and absorb a large share of the proceeds. It must be so, else some curb would be put upon them."

A young man now approached the group, a tennis racket in his hand. The group welcomed him

warmly, and made room for him at the table. He was smooth-shaven, with clear, frank features, and his blue eyes and fair hair denoted northern birth. His age was probably twenty-three, and his straightforward manner and manly bearing suggested a clean life and a clear conscience.

"Welcome, Harold, and how was the play to-day?" asked Ray, offering him his cigarette-case.

"Assez bien," answered the new-comer. "It does one a world of good to get a bit of sharp exercise on a hot day. An hour's tennis, with a bath and change afterwards, makes a man feel as fresh and cool as can be. Jones and I had a fine single—even at the tenth game, and at last he won by one point. He's to give me my revenge to-morrow. We must all get into training for the tournament. Going for a row in the morning, Ray?"

"I'm afraid I haven't enough energy," was the answer. "I have to sit up half the night to get cool, and then I'm so tired that I want to sleep late the next morning."

"What do you say to a walk to Hajilah to-morrow afternoon, Van Shaak?" said Harold, turning to a young Hollander, who was just emptying a glass of beer. "We can have dinner at the club in Bournabat, and I will drive you home in the evening."

"Ray here has been giving us the blues about brigands," returned Van Shaak. "He says that the country is full of them, and that guards have been posted around Bournabat. I'm afraid we shall have to give up our tramp for the present."

"Bosh!" answered Harold. "Ray is a city chap, who rarely goes further than the office and the club, and he would probably see a brigand in every peasant he met who was armed with a matlock or hoe."

Ray felt himself called upon to qualify this statement, and as he was exceedingly well posted on affairs in the vilayet, he proceeded to give a comprehensive account of the latest developments in the province.

"Although, as my friend Harold Elpinstone remarks, I rarely stir from the city, yet by means of my many correspondents, and through the visits of my native clients, I am perhaps better informed of the true state of affairs than many people who travel for pleasure or go on some chance business trip. I have lived here as you know for over thirty years, and I may say with truth that I have never seen the country in such a deplorable condition. It is evident that the ruling hand in Constantinople is losing its grip. Here in Smyrna there is great

prosperity : but it is simply due to the large European interests, and the protection afforded by the greater Powers. In fact, Smyrna is not Turkey. Here the European merchants, bankers, and railway men do pretty much as they please ; indeed, they have more freedom than they would have in their own countries, and save for some petty annoyances at the custom-house or Konak, they are jolly well off.

“ The affairs of the municipality, too, are largely in the hands of Christians, so that the city is well paved, lighted and guarded. This, I suppose accounts for the large influx of people from the interior and from Macedonia, for they know comfort and safety can be secured here. See how the city is growing : go to any part of it and you will see schools, churches, business blocks and houses rising, while as for new stores and banks, we have some of the finest in the world.

“ But go into the country and what do you find ? Turkey, with the peasant population ground to powder between a corrupt Government on the one hand and numberless bands of outlaws on the other. I could relate hundreds of pitiful tales of oppression and violence that would make you, who have lived years in the country, start with surprise.

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Not so much tales of injustice done to Greek and Armenian, who are generally clever enough to get even with Government and robber alike, as of injustice to the Turk himself, who is a fine sturdy fellow when untainted by contact with western civilization.

“ The tax-gatherer takes most of his small store and then the brigand (a general term for all outlaws) pounces upon the rest. Here is an example. A Moslem baker had a small oven and shop in a hamlet near Mysa. The tax-gatherer came in May and levied an exorbitant impost upon his stock. The poor man had no redress, and was forced to give up all his savings of the year. A few days later a band of brigands swooped down upon the hamlet, and after robbing the other people, compelled this baker to promise to supply them with twenty loaves of bread each day, and to carry it to their camp in the mountains above. The baker did so for a day or two, but when his stock of flour ran out, and he found he had no money to buy more, he was obliged to flee with his family to the plain, where they are now in destitution. The baker afterwards learned that the brigands came down next day and burnt his shop. Why, even the pedlars, who carry their packs from hamlet to hamlet, are robbed by soldiers and outlaws

alike, so that they have had to abandon their callings. Thus, there is in the interior fearful poverty among a large part of the population, with the result that the younger or stronger of the men who have been ruined are taking to the mountains in ever-increasing numbers, and are swelling the already large bands of outlaws. As for the wealthier Turks, who may have some favour with the Government and so can protect themselves in some way from the tax-gatherers, a powerful outlaw sends one of them a note demanding immediate payment of the sum of several hundred pounds. The Turk sends it. He knows if he does not his house will be burned, or himself or some of his family taken, so that he will lose as much or more in the end.

“ You may ask about the attitude of the local or provincial governor. What can he do even if he has the wish to put a stop to the nuisance? He has a few ill-armed and badly fed men. He sends them to the mountains after a long delay. The outlaws easily avoid them through their perfect knowledge of the country ; or else lure them on and slaughter them without mercy. Soldiers are sometimes sent from Smyrna : but they accomplish little or nothing ; and the only results of their

campaigns are long articles in the Smyrna papers, describing fierce battles, and "complete defeats" of the brigand bands.

"It is even hinted that a lion's share of the proceeds from brigandage finds its way by some mysterious channel into official coffers at the metropolis, and it would seem that there must be some truth in the rumour. For surely, if the powers that be had the will, they would soon find a way to put a stop to outlawry, especially as it is now approaching the very gates of the city."

Harold was greatly interested in Ray's talk, for he spoke with the air of one who was fully acquainted with the situation, and who sympathized deeply with the Moslems. Though born and brought up in Smyrna, Harold Elpinstone had been absent some years in England and America, and had been so busy since his return to Turkey that he had had little time for studying its affairs. He therefore inquired of his informant as to the leaders of these bands, whether they were Greeks or Turks, and how they operated.

Ray continued: "Nearly all the leaders are Moslems, some being men of comparatively good character who have been driven into outlawry by the injustice of the Government. I have in

mind one in particular, and he may serve as a type, though I question if any other leader can approach him in general worth of character. I have met him myself, and I well remember how prepossessed I was by his appearance. His name is Ali Effendi. His father held some small position at Mysa, and was a man of integrity, simplicity and real worth. His honesty in dealing with the natives, and his consequent popularity, aroused the jealousy of his brother officials, and they trumped up some charge against him. He was arrested and put in prison. After a long time he was released, broken in health and fortune. His native townsmen urged him to seek redress, and all other means proving futile, he at last took the law into his own hands and shot his chief persecutor, who was the Kaimakam or governor of the city. He then fled to the mountains, where he was afterwards surrounded and killed.

“ His son Ali was a boy of twelve at the time, and was profoundly horrified and infuriated by the death of his father. Also, as he grew to manhood and saw many similar acts of injustice, his mind was inflamed with anger against those whom he regarded as the murderers of his parent. He bore an especial grudge against the chaoush who had commanded the soldiers

when his father was killed, and determined some day to have vengeance upon him.

“ Ali devoted himself especially to the chase, and soon became an expert in the use of the rifle. He had inherited a small farm from his mother, which he worked with his brother in the summer ; but after the grapes were dried and sold, he invariably resorted to the mountains, where he passed whole weeks in hunting, sleeping at night upon the bare ground, and eating the simple fare he was able to obtain from shepherds and charcoal-burners. He thus became inured to exposure, and was soon acquainted with every cave and hiding-place in the great range of mountains. He also got to know the rough but loyal mountaineers, among whom he became very popular on account of his frank, engaging manners and his generosity.

“ In 1899 he attained his majority, and signalized the event by a feast, to which he invited his more intimate friends. He did the honours in his quiet, dignified manner, and after the feast was finished asked six of the young men to remain, as he had a small matter of importance to discuss with them. During the preceding years he had been studying his companions, and had already formed the project of organizing a band to revenge his father’s

death, and to protect himself afterwards from the law.

“ He took his friends to a vineyard outside the city, and after rehearsing the story of his father’s ruin and death, he asked them if they would cast in their lot with him. He told them he had sold his small property, and had arms and ammunition ready. Such was the confidence he inspired that they all agreed to his proposal, and that same night he armed them, went to the chaoush’s house, shot him dead as he appeared in the doorway, and took to the mountains. His act was secretly applauded by the people of Mysa, and soon many young men who had been ruined, or had some grudge against the Government, resorted to his hiding-place, as in former times their counterparts flocked to David at the Cave of Adullam.

“ This took place eight years ago, and since then all the power of the Government has been impotent to capture Ali. He reigns supreme in that range, and is so popular among the peasants, whom he never robs, that they almost worship him. He has extorted large sums from the wealthy Turks of that and other districts, and has killed hundreds of soldiers and a few Greeks and Armenians who refused his demands; yet he has never harmed a

European, and has even gone out of his way to show courtesy to travellers who have passed near his camping-place.

“ I understand that he has a great admiration for the English, and hopes some day, if he is pardoned, to visit England, and there display his skill with the rifle.

“ As for the other brigand leaders they are an ignorant, and, for the most part, a brutal lot of Moslems who prey on friend and foe alike.”

It would be difficult to describe the impression which this story made upon Harold. His long life in Turkey had not prepared him to apprehend this new world which now opened up before him. Yet the description interested him extremely. He pictured Ali living in simple state in his mountain home. Ali the invincible, whom all the force of the Ottoman arms had not been able to vanquish ; Ali the idol of the peasants and mountaineers, from whom alone they could secure justice and protection ; Ali the generous, who robbed the rich Turks and Christians of the plain, and spent his gains with a free hand among the poor ; Ali the pious, who led his band to prayers five times a day ; Ali the noble, who had risked life and fortune to revenge the base murder of a father.

Harold's companions chaffed him on his silence and distraction ; but he replied with a good-natured sally and then excused himself, returning to his rooms in the Rue Parallel.

After a hasty meal he went to his balcony, which faced the distant mountains where the fires of charcoal-burners glimmered fitfully, like stars rising out of the haze, and still the vision of the brigand chief was before him. What a strange condition of affairs ! On the threshold of Europe—in the twentieth century—a glimpse of the Middle Ages ! How Harold longed to view the scene closer, and to converse with this strange being who seemed to combine so many qualities of good and evil, of honesty and violence, of simplicity and cunning.

Might he not go and visit him ? Ray had spoken of his affability and courtesy to strangers. But if he went as a tourist he could hardly remain more than a few days, and might not then see him as he really was. Harold was now glad he had spent so much time studying Turkish. He had had an Armenian nurse as a boy, and his father's servants had all been Turks, so he had picked the language up from infancy. Moreover, he had given most of his time to studying it since his return from England and

America. An inspiration now came to him. Why not visit Ali as a Turk ? He had seen much of the Turks in Smyrna, and was well acquainted with their customs.

The plan, however, seemed foolhardy, and after some further thought Harold went to bed, only to dream that he was visiting Ali ; that the latter received him cordially, and that he found him a most interesting companion.

Next morning Harold rose early, and went for a row on the bay. The water was like glass and the air was fresh and cool ; but as he was rowing, his eyes wandered to the distant mountains, and he longed to be upon them. He pictured Ali at prayers, the first of the day ; he imagined the delightful life in the open air, in the clear mountain atmosphere ; he smelt the scent of the pine-woods and the odour of the outdoor cooking. And he asked himself why he should remain in the stifling city, working in his office to amass a sum larger than he would ever need. His father had left him a moderate fortune, and had wisely invested it in English Consols, so that the son would have no need to worry about the future. He had no one he need consult regarding his movements. Why should he not disguise himself, and see life as it really was in the interior, before the

intervention of Foreign Powers, or a change in the Government, brought about a new régime ?

He returned to his apartments, and had a cold bath and his morning coffee. He then went to Ray's office to consult him in the matter. Ray was a man of prudence and worth, who could be trusted to hold his tongue. He had known Harold's father well, and would do as directed in the management of affairs.

Ray was rather surprised at his early visit, but received him cordially ; and as they smoked their morning cigarettes Harold told him of his interest in the previous night's revelations, and of his desire to visit Ali and to really see life in the interior.

Ray could easily appreciate Harold's feeling as he knew the young man well, and was acquainted with his generous, romantic nature. He immediately began to consider ways and means. He soon concluded that it would be useless for Harold to visit the interior as a European ; as such he would be the object of attention and constant supervision on the part of the Turkish officials. Soldiers would be sent with him whenever he visited any place away from the railway, and Ali would hardly receive him if accompanied by guards.

“ You might go as a Greek or Armenian merchant ;

but then what business could you have with Ali ? ” he mused aloud. “ Then, too, Ali has little love for the *rayahs*,¹ whom he regards as corrupt, and he has plundered or killed several of them. As a rich Turk you would be in danger, and as a poor peasant you would soon be found out to be a fraud, because your features are too refined for you to be able to play that rôle. If you acted as a refugee from Crete, the son of a good house who had lost their property, you might pass muster with Ali, and your evident intelligence could then be explained.

“ Then, too, many of the Cretans are fair, and your blue eyes and light skin would not be noticeable. A few days’ exposure in the sun will change your complexion to a much deeper tint. On the whole, my advice would be to procure a costume such as the Moslem youth of the middle classes wear, and to go boldly to Ali ; tell a straightforward story, saying that you had heard of his justice and generosity ; that you have no home, and no means of procuring a livelihood except by manual labour ; and ask him to receive you into his band.

“ Ali is bound to be pardoned by the Government, so that you will be spared any need to shed blood in his defence, and you will be able in a few months to

¹ Turkish subjects who are Christians.

see as much as you like of him and of the peasant Turks generally."

Harold was delighted with this easy solution of the matter. He knew of Ali's liking for young men, and he had no doubt he would be able to please the brigand chief, and to entertain him with descriptions of the outside world. He therefore begged Ray to procure him an outfit, and after giving some directions about his business affairs he left, saying that he would return in the afternoon to try on his costume.

The day passed quickly, and Harold was surprised when his servant notified him that afternoon tea was served. He was soon on his way to Ray's office, where he found his friend turning over several articles of clothing. He quickly donned a thin linen shirt, open at the front ; a thick and heavily embroidered jacket, a little the worse for wear ; baggy trousers of blue, also embroidered at the sides ; and thick cloth leggings fastening at the back. A pair of loose-fitting shoes without heels finished his attire, and these in turn fitted into a pair of leather overshoes, which are always taken off on entering a mosque or house.

Ray now handed him a huge leather belt or girdle which was provided with numerous folds. Harold buckled it on, and found in the folds or

pockets a silver-plated box filled with tobacco, a silver cigarette-holder, a large bone-handled knife, a large bandana handkerchief, and a cloth money-bag : all which indispensables Ray's thoughtfulness had provided. He had even procured a Turkish *teschereh*, or passport, witnessing that " Mehmet Torban " was a native of Candia, and the document had on the back a visé for Smyrna.

It now needed only a fez to complete Harold's equipment, and one was selected from several which had been brought to the office. A band of yellow silk was then wound round it like a turban, and Ray stepped back to survey his protégé.

" Two things seem to be wrong," he said at last ; " you should have your head shaved, and your skin coloured a bit at the breast, knees and ankles. Better darken your feet a bit too, as you must uncover them for washing many times a day."

Some henna was therefore procured, and a diluted solution was rubbed on the exposed parts.

" Now," exclaimed Ray, " when your head is shaved, and you assume a more unsophisticated air, you will be a veritable Moslem. Don the European clothes again, and go to your barber. You can be back in half an hour, and then you can dress for the last time."

This was soon accomplished. Harold transferred his money, a few gold pieces with some silver and copper, to the cloth purse, and the two friends prepared to part.

Ray embraced his friend in the eastern fashion, and there was a tremor in his voice as he said: "I pray God, my dear boy, that no harm may come to you from this escapade. Had I not full confidence in your tact and resource, I should never have considered your going for a moment. But I cannot see that you run any real danger, and it is certainly the chance of a lifetime to live a while with this picturesque personage, and to gain a thorough knowledge of interior Turkish life before it is wholly changed. I think Ali will like you, and you will find in him a really fine man, notwithstanding his mistaken views. If there is any change in the attitude of the Government towards him, be sure that I will give you due warning, so that you can return before there is danger. As long as Ali remains at Samsun Dagħ you can easily get away to the railway; but if he moves to Besh Parmak, the only other range he knows, you must make your way to the sea and cross over to Samos, where I will have a trustworthy man, Mavromatis, on the look-out for you. But let us hope you will be

safely back by October, brown as a berry and fuller than ever of your old-time humour."

Harold was deeply touched by Ray's solicitude and thoughtfulness.

"What a regular old brick you are, Ray!" he cried. "Be sure I'll take care of myself, if only for your sake. I'll write you a note in Turkish from time to time; and you may count on seeing me back in Smyrna before three months are gone. Thanks ever so much for your goodness; I shall never forget it."

Harold next wrote a note to his servant, stating that he was going away for a few months, and telling him to keep his rooms ready, as he might return suddenly.

"By the way," said Ray, "when you return, come right to my office here. I'll have your clothes ready, and you can change in a moment, and so avoid comment."

"Just like you, Ray, to think of everything. I never realized before what an awfully good fellow you are; and I hope I may have the chance to do you a good turn some day."

Ray clapped him on the back and added hastily, "That's all right, my dear fellow; just make sure about returning safely and I'll be satisfied."

The two friends embraced again, and Harold went out into the street, intending to pass the night at a khan, as the train for Mysa left very early in the morning.

CHAPTER II

ALI EFFENDI

NEXT morning Mehmet, or Harold as he may now indifferently be called, bought a third-class ticket at the Point station for Mysa, paying for it about one dollar. His breakfast had consisted of a roll costing one mattalik, or halfpenny, and a small piece of cheese; for none of the Turks, and but few of the Christians in Turkey, ever eat more than a bit of bread and cheese, or olives before noon.

Mehmet's travelling companions consisted of a motley herd of peasants, with a few Jewish and Greek pedlars, some of whom had vast quantities of baggage, though most of them, like Mehmet, carried nothing with them but their clothing.

The train started at seven, and passed at first between orange orchards to Caravan Bridge, the other station in the city, where a much larger number of travellers got in, packing the third-class

compartments to overflowing. The guard then locked the doors, and the train started at a snail's pace on its great journey of sixty-eight miles, which with good luck it might compass in five hours.

Mehmet had secured a seat by the window on the side facing the west, and he might hope for a certain amount of air and shade for the greater part of the journey. At first a steep grade had to be surmounted, and the train went so slowly that it seemed at times to be stationary. The view from this side, however, was so entrancing that the slow pace was not noticeable; and although Mehmet had often made the journey before in Christian garb, he was never tired of it. The classic Meles, where tradition relates Homer was wont to bathe, wound its rippling course beneath; while on either flank towered high hills, rising almost perpendicularly from its shores. On one side were terraced gardens, with their beds laid out with mathematical precision; on the other was the carriage-road; towering above was Mount Pageus with its bristling ramparts, a relic of Byzantine and Greek workmanship.

When halfway up the grade the train passed under the arch of an immense aqueduct, which

spanned the Meles at this point and connected the two hills. A little later the top of the grade was reached, where the train stopped at the first station, Paradise ! It was truly a fit name for a beautiful spot on the Meles, where two great Roman aqueducts spanned a narrow gorge, and a little waterfall delighted the groups of Moslems who repaired thither on their holy Friday.

A branch line was seen running to Boudja, one of Smyrna's chief suburbs ; and in the fork of the branch lay the racecourse and golf links, where the Europeans went for exercise and sport.

After two hours' run the train stopped at Tourbali. Here a switch was made from the main line running to Ephesus and Aidin, to a branch line running to Mysa. They now crossed a great plain where many heaps of barley lay piled, and the primitive method of threshing was being carried on. Numbers of horses or oxen were driven round on the outside of the heap, and gradually, in the course of hundreds of circuits, the heap disappeared under their hoofs, being trodden into chaff.

At other places men and women were winnowing the grain, throwing it up into the air with forks, and depending on the wind to do the work of separating. But that day the wind was unfavourably

light, and both chaff and grain fell back into almost the same place. Still the work continued, for your Turkish peasant acts in his own primitive way, and lays the burden of failure upon Providence.

Mehmet was struck with the contrast between the size of the plain and the sparse population. Here was an absolutely level tract, comprising some hundreds of square miles ; it was doubtless most fertile, as the ground was black, and there was an abundant rainfall : and yet the train proceeded mile after mile without a single hamlet or even hut being seen, and the few stops were at small stations where a few sacks of grain were piled. Mehmet thought enthusiastically what a transformation the district would undergo if it were in England, or America, or Japan.

Towards noon the mountains of the Tmolus range appeared through the heat-haze which hung over the plain. His heart beat faster as he realized that he was nearing his goal, the turning-point of success in his undertaking, or ignominious failure and disgrace. The train finally arrived at its destination at Mysa, near the foot of the mountains. He alighted, and was about to glide away into the town, when a Turkish officer approached and asked for his

teschereh, demanding who he was. Mehmet replied that he was a Cretan seeking work, and produced his passport. The official examined it and seemed satisfied, for he made some notes, and then passed on to interrogate some other traveller.

Mehmet mingled with the crowd, and walked with them to the town, which is situated between the mountains and the station.

He stopped with some of them at a khan, where he had a coffee, and spoke with his fellow-lodgers. There was a venerable old hodja present, and Mehmet asked him about the place, and the prospects for work. He told him he had come from Crete, where his family had been ruined, and he was reduced to work as a labourer. The hodja was sympathetic, and said he had a son who had just been drafted as a soldier for Yemen, and he doubted if he would ever see him again.

"He is about your age," added the hodja, "and you remind me of him very much. How many noble youths that fearful country has consumed Allah alone knows! Most of those who escape the bullets of the Arabs are killed by the climate; and of the few who finally embark on board ship to return to their homes, perhaps one-fourth at last stumble to their doorsteps."

Mehmet inquired of the old man if there were any brigands in the neighbourhood, and the hodja replied that Ali Effendi had driven all the others out, and reigned supreme over that range.

"They say," the hodja went on, "that he is coming to-morrow to receive his pardon, and that Mohammed Pasha with his assistant is coming in a special train this afternoon to hand it him. If you wish to see both, you had better remain at this khan, as the Konak is only a few yards away."

The young man thanked the hodja for his information, and asked where the chief mosque lay. The hodja said he would call for him two hours before sunset, and in the meantime Mehmet should go out and see the city.

Mehmet first engaged a blanket for the night, and then walked up the principal streets. He was careful to conduct himself as a true Moslem should, with dignity, and without showing undue interest in anything; but when he reached the outskirts of the city, and had the great range of Samsun Dag before him, he sat down on a wall, and passed an hour gazing at its summit.

The mountains loomed up grandly in the foreground. Perhaps an hour's walk over the plain separated its foothills from the city. It seemed a

vast range, and he was unable to distinguish the main peak from the great mass that formed the skyline. As he looked, he heard the musical call of the muezzin to prayers. "Allah-il-Allah," chanted in a high voice, resounded like a trumpet-call over the house-tops. Mehmet walked quickly back to the khan, taking little notice of the Christian population which seemed to predominate in the business quarter of the city. He found the hodja awaiting him, and in his company wended his way to the mosque. In the large courtyard a crowd were waiting for their turn at the fountain. Mehmet at last was able to wash his hands, face, and feet drying them with his handkerchief. Then leaving his leathern overshoes at the door of the mosque, he entered, and knelt near the hodja.

He had often visited the mosques of Smyrna, Constantinople, and even Damascus, as a Christian traveller ; but it was a new experience to go through the ceremony as an orthodox Moslem. It was easy, however, to conduct himself so as to escape notice, for the chief muezzin led the throng, reciting the Arabic service in a deep, reverential tone. The crowd followed his movements in every particular, putting their hands to their ears, kneeling with forehead touching the pavement, rising and kneel-

ing again until the service was finished. Mehmet was interested as never before to see the absence of decoration, of any appeal to the senses, in this place of worship. There were no pictures or images to distract the attention, no incense to tickle the olfactory nerve, and no music to intoxicate the ear. What a contrast this plain hall offered to the gaudy, perfumed and resounding places of worship which Christians frequented ! Here all was still, and save for the elegant mihrab which showed the direction of Mecca, and some few texts from the Koran on the walls, there was nothing on which the eye or the ear would wish to dwell. The imagination could supply all that was needful, however : the great protecting Spirit of God, the paradise awaiting the faithful, the great prophet Mohammed and the holy men of all faiths watching over them. No wonder Moslems looked with contempt and horror on the idolatry of the Westerners !

After prayers our knight-errant was introduced to the chief muezzin who was a Dervish, and was invited by him to a service on the following evening, when his band of Dancing Dervishes would perform their mysterious ceremony. Mehmet expressed his pleasure at the prospect of this experience, as in Crete there were no Dervishes.

In the evening he met the Kaimakam of Mysa, with whom the hodja was intimately acquainted. The conversation turned upon the great event of the year, the arrival of the Vali and his assistant that night, and the visit of Ali Effendi next morning. The hodja introduced Mehmet as a well-educated Moslem from Crete, who had left that disturbed island on account of the Greek occupation. The Kaimakam asked many questions about the condition of affairs there. He had been with the army in Macedonia, and foresaw the speedy liberation of all the Christian provinces.

“There is no doubt,” he observed, “if the more intelligent Turks do not do something to reform their country, the great Powers of Europe will soon step in and take charge of affairs. France, England and Russia have now settled their differences, and will act together. Italy will join them and Germany will be forced to drop her hypocritical mask, and either join them or be pushed to the wall. But if Turkey can secure a constitution, and the latent powers of the Moslems have opportunity for development, what may we not accomplish? Japan has set us an example which we will follow if we are wise. Our soldiers are brave, and excel all others in endurance. With a good Government, and the adoption

of western methods, we shall soon be in a position to command the respect of the world."

At eight in the evening a salute was fired, and Mehmet went at once to the railway station, where a special train, consisting of an engine and a wagon saloon, had just drawn up. A large crowd had gathered, and Mehmet, with Western impudence, elbowed his way to the front, where he saw a grey-bearded, bent man, dressed in simple European clothes, alight from the car. He was leaning on the arm of a bold young fellow, who had his breast covered with decorations, and received as his own due the homage rendered to his superior. A guard of soldiers presented arms, and a vile Turkish orchestra made an attempt to play the National Anthem. The procession then set out for the Konak through the decorated streets, and afterwards discreetly dispersed leaving the Vali and his assistant to their ablutions, and the feast prepared for them.

Mehmet returned to the khan, and lay down on the floor after wrapping himself in his blanket. He passed the night in partial wakefulness, due to the snoring of his fellow-lodgers and to the attentions of less welcome fellow-creatures. He was, however, on foot at the first dawn of day, eager to realize the fruition of his dreams, the meeting with Ali Effendi.

There was a general exodus from the khan at about sunrise—prayers even being forgotten or deferred. Mehmet followed the throng which set out for the plain that separated Samsun Dag from Mysa. They arrived at the outskirts of the city in the course of an hour, and saw a band of men approaching on foot. At a considerable distance in front of the main party was an advance guard of ten men armed with rifles and revolvers, the rifles covered with silver mountings from stock to muzzle. They were dressed in the gala Turkish costume, with wreaths of flowers around their fezes. All were robust young men, who seemed as fresh as if they had just awakened. Then followed the main band with Ali Effendi at their head. It was easy to tell which was the chief. The short, sturdy man of thirty, with his fez pushed well back on his head, walked with the carriage of a king. A noble brow, a fearless countenance, long moustaches and a square chin, were the characteristics which Mehmet noted especially. He carried an American Winchester rifle, unadorned by the silver mountings which his vainer companions affected. A band of thirty young men surrounded and followed him, a huge and cruel-looking Turk, his lieutenant, walking by his side. After an interval of some hundreds of

yards came the rear-guard of ten men, dressed like their companions.

The crowd waited respectfully until Ali and his band had passed. They then followed in his wake, walking through the principal streets of the city to the Konak. The windows and doors on the way were crammed with people, all waiting for a chance to see the indomitable Ali, whose prowess had exacted a pardon from the Government. The narrow square of the Konak permitted ingress to only a few besides the large guard of Turkish soldiers and Ali's men ; but the Kaimakam's friend, the old hodja, saw Mehmet and beckoned him to come where a good place was found for him and he could witness the whole scene.

Ali Effendi left his band in the courtyard of the Konak. It was a compact phalanx of fifty men, who might exact fearful vengeance in case of treachery. He then went to meet the Kaimakam, who was standing on the porch of the palace. The official was unarmed, but Ali, although he had left his rifle in the hands of his lieutenant, kept his hands on his good Browning pistols. Ali took his left hand from his belt, and gravely saluted the Kaimakam, who led his distinguished guest to the main room of the palace, where the Vali pasha and

his resplendent assistant were sitting. The brigand chief saluted these men in the same way, letting his hands drop to their natural position on his belt where rested his trusty guardians.

"*Hosh Geldinez*," ¹ exclaimed the pasha.

"*Hosh Bueduk*," ² answered Ali.

"I hope I see you in health," continued the governor.

"Allah be praised, yes," responded the brigand, "and may He keep you in His hand, and give you many more years of life and happiness."

Meanwhile Ali looked closely, and, it must be said, rather contemptuously, at the assistant, Farkouh Pasha.

"What a pity," he thought, "that the noble Vali has not the youth of his assistant, and that this unprincipled young man has not the virtues of his superior."

Farkouh Pasha returned Ali's bold look with a shifty glance, and motioned to the table before them. The Vali took a document therefrom, and handed it to Ali Effendi, saying—

"The Padishah has commanded me to present you with this firman. It restores your freedom and good name, and is issued in recognition of your

¹ Welcome.

² Greetings.

valour and general high character. It is given in the hope that you will henceforth prove as true and valiant an ally of His Majesty, as you have heretofore been a redoubtable foe to his officers. I now place you in charge of this mountain district, you will clear it of all outlaws, and see that order is kept everywhere."

Ali Effendi took the pardon, and gravely saluted the Vali.

"Your Excellency," he said, "I am a true patriot and a devoted subject of the Padishah ; and in your person I salute and render homage to nobility and integrity. If I have only you and His Majesty to consider, be sure that you can command my services and my life at any time. I thank you heartily for bringing me this pardon, and henceforth you may be sure that in this district there will be no disturbance."

Coffee and cigarettes were then offered, and they chatted together for a few moments. Ali then salaamed, and withdrew to the courtyard and took his rifle. The band then filed out with Ali at their head, his pardon sticking out from his girdle, and soon the city settled down to its customary stagnation.

Mehmet learned that the band would sleep that

night at Bel-Kairé, at the foot of the mountain. He therefore resolved to set out at sunset, and try and speak with Ali Effendi before morning, as the march to the top of the mountain would doubtless begin at daybreak. So he returned to the khan, and lolled around until late in the afternoon. He then paid his reckoning, amounting to a quarter of a medjid, and started to walk through the plain.

The moon rose over the mountains when he was halfway to his destination, and a delightful freshness pervaded the atmosphere after the heat of the day. At first he walked between vineyards and fig-orchards, where simple booths sheltered the armed watchers. Here and there an apparition appeared standing motionless with arms outstretched, the eastern version of the scarecrow. But the red fez and baggy trousers took the place of the battered stovepipe hat and long overalls.

After a little the cultivated portions were left behind, and only the heather and fragrant undergrowth bordered the way. Soon he entered a river-bed, the most common roadway in the rural districts of Turkey. High banks rose on each side, and large boulders encumbered the path, which wound from side to side. At some distance from the camp he encountered an armed zebeck whom

he instantly recognized as one of Ali's men. The outpost accosted him, and asked where he was going. Mehmet truthfully answered that he wished to speak to Ali Effendi in hopes of getting admitted to his band. The sentry was taken with the youth and manly bearing of Mehmet. He uttered a jackal-cry, and soon another guard appeared, to whom the first gave orders that Mehmet should be taken to Ali Effendi.

Another walk of half an hour brought the two to a small hamlet, with a huge booth in the centre, where a large number of peasants and muleteers were sitting, drinking the inevitable coffee. Just beyond this was a large olive orchard, where a fire was burning, and around it was seated a group of armed men.

The guide uttered a guttural sound, and Ali's lieutenant came out and spoke to him. The lieutenant cast a dubious glance at Mehmet, but his suspicions seemed disarmed by his simple and youthful appearance. He returned to the group, and spoke a few words to his chief. Ali at once rose and came to the edge of the orchard, where Mehmet and his guard were standing. The moon was shining clearly, and Ali stood for a moment regarding his visitor. His quick eye ran over his

person, observing that he was tall and well-built, that he was unarmed, that he was no boor, but quick and intelligent. He was obviously much pleased at the prospect of obtaining such a valuable recruit, so he welcomed him politely, led him to the camp-fire, and ordered a man to bring him food.

With eastern courtesy, Ali Effendi waited until his guest had satisfied his hunger, even urging him to eat more heartily. He then offered him his tobacco-box and cigarette-paper, and, while they were sipping their coffee, Ali asked him as to his health and that of his family. This gave Mehmet an opportunity of broaching the main subject.

He told Ali his father and mother were dead, his family had been ruined by the reprisals of the Cretans, and like many of his Moslem countrymen he had left Crete in the hope of bettering his condition in Asia Minor. He said he had remained some days in Smyrna looking for employment, but there was no opportunity in that city except for hamals and cavasses.

"I was becoming quite despondent," he went on, "when I heard of you and the band which you support. I determined to come to your camp, and ask you to receive me into your employ. I have had some little education, and am a fair marksman.

I love the life in the open air, and if you will accept my services, I will serve you loyally."

Ali observed Mehmet narrowly while he was giving this account. He believed him, and his youth, strength and frankness appealed to him. Besides, he thought how advantageous it would be to have a man in his employ who had some little education, to read and write his letters ; perhaps to keep his accounts if he proved trustworthy. He accepted him.

It was now two hours after sunset. Ali Effendi and most of the band performed their ablutions at a fountain near by. A small number of men were left on guard. The chief then led the others to a level space outside the grove, where all laid their rifles on the ground. The oft-repeated prayers were offered up to the great Jehovah who had guarded them throughout the eventful day. Presently they returned to the grove, and were soon fast asleep round the fire.

Harold's mind was now free from care. He had broken bread with the brigands. Ali had accepted him, and seemed greatly predisposed in his favour. Moreover, the sweet, cool air was refreshing, and he looked forward to living in it for several months. He closed his eyes contentedly, and slept far sounder

on the bare ground than he had the night before at the khan in Mysa, where the foul air and insect hordes had made night hideous.

Next morning, after prayers and a coffee, the band lighted their cigarettes, and set out on their stiff climb to Samsun Dag. They hoped to be halfway up the mountain before sunrise, or at least before the heat became intense. At first the path wound in and out among orchards. Then little by little at the higher altitude the plain was revealed, still sleeping beneath its filmy blanket of mist. The moon was just setting, and it was difficult to see the step-like path, which at times was very steep. The stars vanished, leaving the sky to the first blush of the dawn.

The tramp at first was delightful. The step was springy, and Mehmet felt like running up the slope. The sun rose, casting a sleepy and bewildered look as it peeped over the distant hills. But it soon collected its energies and dispelled the mist, and disclosed Mysa sprawling in the midst of the plain. The young man paused a moment and looked. He could make out a level road that stretched to the west, and saw the Smyrna train puffing along to the sea.

The climb now became more painful, and the huge

bandana handkerchief proved none too large for the absorption of the moisture which Providence supplies to regulate the temperature of the body.

But shortly the summit of the first range was reached, and a cool wind fanned the flaming faces of the climbers. As Mehmet looked over the ridge, the scene nearly took his breath away. He had expected to look down into another brown and dusty plain, and here there seemed to be a part of the Lake District of Scotland.

Covering a wide space between two high mountains was a glorious lake stretching far to the north. On the left a stately grove of cypresses encircled the shore. This was flanked by groups of wide-branching chestnuts, and the trees were so thickly planted that one could see no sign of a hamlet. On the right great olive orchards covered the space between the lake and the mountain, while in the foreground and in the distance were extensive meadows, where thousands of buffalo, sheep, and goats were pastured.

Harold looked several times at the panorama, and at last concluded it was not a mirage. It was one of the paradoxes of nature. Trees, water, turf! in a country where these were rarely found in summer even in the plain. It was Kiz Geul, and was perhaps the hollow crater of an extinct volcano which had

tried to atone for its past destructiveness by present beneficence.

The destination of the band was not here, however, but in a more distant valley, and closer to the main peak which had formed an asylum in the past. So the march was resumed, and an hour's journey brought the band to a second valley, less extensive than the first and less wooded. There was no lake, but numerous brooks traversed the meadow. The path ran under huge chestnut and walnut trees, where great masses of mistletoe clustered, and through lanes where brambles grew as in England.

But even this valley was not the goal. Another ridge had to be crossed. It was low, however, and was soon surmounted. Ali now looked down upon his home, and Mehmet, who was standing beside him, heard him utter a sigh of satisfaction and relief as he surveyed the beautiful spot. He followed his gaze, and saw before him a picture almost as entrancing as the first. A great green triangle. At the apex and beneath the lofty Samsun Dagħ was a gorge. At the base was a compact mass of trees, poplars, chestnuts and pines, the pines rising half-way up the precipitous mountain, the top of which was covered with snow. Deeper in the gorge, where

the sides of the triangle began to open, was a hamlet, consisting of low houses, their roofs made of large flat slates. Further down were orchards, and a few vineyards, with a garden here and there. Then came the wide meadow which was as green as an emerald. This was dotted in places with herds of cattle. The background, the base of the triangle, was the sky-line.

The band began to descend to the village, and Mehmet beheld the great mountain before him. He was especially interested in this feature of the landscape, as he knew that its numberless caves had sheltered Ali in times past. Above the forest of pines the side of the mountain was absolutely bare. Some patches of snow lay glistening in the sun, and little rivulets could be seen tracing their silvery course over the bare rocks. The ascent was so nearly perpendicular that Mehmet wondered how Ali could reach its summit, which seemed to be about five thousand feet above the base.

The band ended its march at the market-square of the village. There were but few shops here, most of the buildings being used as coffee-houses. A diminutive mosque, without minarets, stood on one side, and to this the band repaired, after washing off the dust of the journey, to refresh the spiritual

nature with thanks to God for His protecting care.

Ali now left them and went to his house, where one of his wives, and his two young children were living. Mehmet and the others chattered with their friends, or slept on the benches in the coffee-houses, until late in the afternoon, when the chief again appeared. He led his men to the meadow, where the evening was always spent.

A great feast had been prepared, and the band divided into small circles, and sat on the ground around the different trays. Young lambs roasted whole, and stuffed with rice, formed the main part. Harold's appetite had been sharpened by the long climb and the mountain air, and he was grateful and perhaps greedy, when he reached forward and plucked off a bit of the tempting viand. The other diners in his circle were Ali Effendi, his lieutenant, and a Turkish officer whom Ali had met in Mysa, and had invited to visit him. Mehmet paid little attention to them until his hunger was satisfied, but put forth his hand at regular intervals, and conveyed the luscious morsels to his mouth. He wondered at first how to eat the rice, but followed the example of the others, and made spoons of his bread, which he also used to dip in the gravy. Ali had brought

a few onions from his house, and he cut them into quarters with his dagger, and distributed them.

"Really," thought Harold, as he concluded his operations, "these Turks know how to cook lamb and rice at least. An English or American epicure would go miles for such a dish. Young lambs cooked to shreds, so that knives and forks are unnecessary. Rice, and these delicious pine seeds that are so nourishing and palatable, bread fresh and sweet! Then, too, see how daintily these fierce men eat with hands clean and trimmed! They reach forward nonchalantly, and wait if any one else is grasping a particular morsel."

The meal was not concluded, however, for Ali's servant removed the huge copper tray, and set on some earthenware jars of curdled buffalo milk. Mehmet had never liked the acid *jaourt* which was served in Smyrna, but this dish was rich and sweet. Wooden spoons were supplied to the feasters, and Mehmet ate heartily of the creamy mass. A Turkish sweetmeat was served last, and then all rose and washed at the brook. Ali gave Mehmet a piece of soap, and when the cleansing business was finished, all sat on a ledge bordering the plain, and drank their coffee.

Mehmet now looked at the Turkish officer care-

fully. He was a large man with a swarthy face. His eyes were very fine, and his voice was low and deep. Mehmet was at once attracted to him, and listened with pleasure to his talk, as did Ali. The chief seemed to entertain a real regard for him, and chatted most affably. Our knight-errant was much surprised at the conversation.

"It is hard to believe," the Turkish Ousbashi ¹ declared, "that only a year ago I was trying my best to kill you. You were on the top of that hill at the foot of the mountain. I could not surround you, because you shot my men when they appeared in the open. I tried to creep up to you, but you were too alert, and gave me a bullet in the head, of which this scar is a witness."

Ali laughed and replied in his low, lisping tone, "Yes, my dear Hamid, I owe you some apologies for that shot. I intended to kill you, but Allah had ordained it otherwise. I am glad my aim was not true, for now I am chatting with you amicably. You were a brave foe, and I am sure you are a sincere friend. But come, the sun is setting, and we must have a little rifle practice before dusk."

Ali called a man, and ordered him to roll a cigarette and place it in a forked stick about thirty

¹ Captain.

metres away. Ali then took his rifle and fired at it. The bullet struck one of the forks, and made the target shiver. The Ousbashi hit the extreme top, and nearly knocked it down. Mehmet was then asked to try his hand, and by some remarkable fluke blew the cigarette into dust. Ali and the officer applauded him, but he modestly disclaimed all skill.

They then sat down again on the ledge and talked for awhile. Harold's eyes wandered to the opposite range of mountains, where the dying rays of the sun were climbing slowly up, until at last they touched the main peak of Samsun Dagħ in a last farewell. The troop moved to a dry part of the meadow, where a venerable hodja led in prayers, and the whole party at last stumbled along through the gloom to the village. Ali and the Ousbashi retired to their quarters, while Harold and the others found sleeping-places in the different coffee-houses near the market-place.

He lay awake for some time on his hard bed, thinking over the experiences of the day. He liked Ali very much from what he had seen of him, and his mind dwelt long on the events which had just taken place in the meadow. There he, an Anglo-American, had sat at dinner with a "bloodthirsty

brigand " and an " unspeakable Turk " ; the two adjectives seemed equally misplaced, since the brigand was humane and honourable in most respects, and the Turk was as fine a man as one would meet in many a day's journey. Harold had travelled and read much, and he saw no special incongruity in the coincidence. Ali evidently regarded the Ousbashi much as Roderick Dhu regarded the Gaul. The circumstance reassured Harold, for he saw that Ali was a man of broad and intelligent views. He looked forward to seeing more of this interesting personality, so shrewd, so sympathetic, so resourceful ; and he at last fell asleep dreaming that he was back in Smyrna, telling good old Ray of his experiences.

CHAPTER III

LIFE AT SAMSUN DAGH

NEXT morning Mehmet awoke feeling quite like a Moslem. He was getting accustomed to the Turkish simplicity of costume and custom ; and, strange to say, felt none the worse for the lack of his morning bath, which was gradually fading into dim remembrance. His frequent ablutions during the day made him conscious of comparative cleanliness, and his Anglo-Saxon adaptability enabled him to take kindly to the new life.

The musical call of the muezzin's son sounded through the morning air. Ali Effendi appeared at once in the market-place, attended by the Pythias-like Osman, who ever kept at his side.

After prayers Ali went to the house of the Ousbashi, who had taken up his quarters in Samsun Dagh for the summer. He was partly in the employ of the Government, to keep watch on the pardoned outlaw, but he was loyal to both, informing the Government

of the doings of Ali, and telling Ali of his communications to the head office.

The Ousbashi, who was a man of some means, expressed his wish to return the compliment which Ali Effendi had paid him the previous evening. Ali assented, and it was arranged that the Ousbashi should prepare a feast in the meadow that evening. After some further talk Ali took his departure, and repaired to the market-place. He sat down in the chief coffee-booth and smoked for some time, then, spying Mehmet, he called him to his side, and asked him more particularly about his wife and family. He showed great penetration and knowledge of human nature, and Mehmet was put on his mettle to give a natural account of his doings. He had fortunately visited Candia, and was able to give a good account of himself, and told everything in such a simple way that Ali was satisfied.

He was struck with the intelligence and evident ability of Mehmet, and seemed anxious to inspire him with respect and a good opinion. He rose and asked him to follow him to the extreme end of the booth, out of hearing of every one, even of the trusted lieutenant. He ordered coffee, and then addressed him as follows—

“ I flatter myself, Mehmet, that I am a good

judge of character. I believe that you are capable and loyal. I do not know how much or what you may have heard of my life, and I do not care, except for one incident. The rest I leave Allah and man to judge, and am sure that both will pardon and exculpate. This incident I will now tell you, for I wish to obtain your regard. Some time ago I received a letter from Farkouh Pasha, in Smyrna. He said that some wealthy families were living unprotected in the plain of Melissa. He suggested that I should carry one of the chief men to the mountains, and demand a ransom of one thousand pounds. He said that with a portion of this sum he would bribe the palace clique at Stamboul, and obtain my pardon. You can understand, Mehmet, what a temptation this was. I had two families and was expecting a son to be born, and to secure him safety I was prepared to do anything.

“One night I set out for Melissa with five men. I arrived in the plain next day at sunset. The farm covered many square miles of plain. I did not know the country well, and we did not find the chief house before daylight. We fired several shots. Aksiades appeared at the window, and fired on my band, wounding my faithful Osman. I became furious at this resistance, and fired a shot that killed

Aksiades as he was reloading his rifle. I then turned to my friend, and found that one of the veins in the left arm was cut. I tied it up with my girdle. I next broke open the house and seized the Greek's wife, and with her in my arms I advanced to a neighbouring house where Aksiades' brother lived. He surrendered. I took him to a hill near by, and in twenty-four hours I received one thousand pounds. I returned to Samsun Dag, stopping on the way at Aidin, where I sent four hundred pounds to Farkouh Pasha.

"I am ashamed and sorry for this incident; ashamed that I should be led or forced to do anything on another's initiative, sorry that I was so womanish as to take a female in my arms as a shield. As for any other deaths that may have happened in my presence I have no apologies to make."

Ali Effendi observed Mehmet narrowly during this recital, to see the effect upon him. He noted his horror and displeasure at the ignoble use of the woman, but was relieved at his sympathy with his contrition. He saw, too, his doubt about the necessity of the whole course of events. Ali interpreted these facial emotions as denoting simplicity and native nobility of character, and he was much pleased with his new recruit.

In the afternoon the band took its usual walk to the meadow, for rifle practice and for the evening meal. Some long-distance firing took place, the target being a board set up against a rock at a distance of nine hundred yards. Ali Effendi fired first, and threw up the dirt at the base of the target. Osman, who was very skilful in long-range firing, struck the centre of the board, while the Ousbashi and Mehmet fired too high, and raised a puff of dust on the hill behind.

It was at a distance of from thirty to sixty yards that Ali was most sure. He broke a coffee cup at a distance of sixty yards with the first shot of his Springfield rifle. An egg was then placed on end in the soft earth forty yards away. The chief drew one of his Browning pistols, and fired three shots. The first two were very close, and the third smashed the egg.

It was still quite early in the afternoon, and the chief now held his daily court beneath a large walnut tree. The whole band was present, the other members having come in from the outlying districts. They had already heard of their chief's pardon, and did not seem to be especially pleased with it, as they feared the band would be dissolved. He reassured them at once by saying that he would

retain all the men at their former pay. He told them of his commission from the governor to clear the range, and to preserve order therein. He also hinted his mistrust of the Government's good faith, and spoke of the reported ill-health of the Padishah, and the prospects of an entire change in the Government.

Like a good general Ali determined to put little faith in anything but his own tried force. He feared a great victory almost as much as a severe defeat, and set out to make his position even more secure.

The people of the hamlets around had sent their hodjas and chief men to congratulate Ali Effendi on his reconciliation with the higher powers, and were very glad to have him as their judge and protector.

A number of cases came up for arbitration. A woman had come from Soma, with complaints about a small association in Mysa, which had received an investment from her ten years before. They had promised to repay the sum with high interest after ten years. She told Ali her daughter was about to be married, and she had asked for her money a few days before. The treasurer of the association, however, informed her that he could not pay the money for some months, and she could not wait, because if the dowry was not ready, the marriage

would be broken off. Ali made some inquiries, and found the facts to be as stated. He therefore commanded one of this band to go with the woman to Mysa, to proceed at once to the treasurer's house, to give the man twelve hours to find the money, and to hand it over to the woman. Her gratitude was extreme, but Ali Effendi waved her away, and turned to the next applicant.

A poor peasant now came forward, and stated that he lived in the plain near Sardis. He had been sick with malaria for six months, and had been unable to repay a small debt which he owed a rich Turk at Kassaba. As soon as he recovered he had gone to the Turk, and asked for a year's delay; but he had been refused, and had had his oxen, tools and furniture taken away. In consequence his harvest had rotted on the ground, and he was now destitute and without employment. He therefore prayed Ali to get back his tools and furniture at least, so that he might live and work elsewhere. Ali decided the case at once by ordering Mehmet to write a letter in Osmanli, commanding the Turk to restore all the peasant's belongings, and to furnish him with work at one medjid per day until the next sowing. He did not add any threat, as that was implied in case of non-performance of orders.

The letter was handed to the peasant and he was dismissed. It was deemed unnecessary to send any member of the band to enforce the order, as Kassaba was within striking distance of Samsun Dagh.

The next case was more serious. It was a complaint of outrage by one of Ali's band. Hosein, a Persian, had become crazed with hasheesh two days before, while Ali was absent at Mysa. He had entered a Moslem's house, wounded the owner, and maltreated the wife and children.

Ali's wrath was extreme at hearing the news. He demanded where the culprit was. Selim, Ali's nephew, said he had been seen in the village the night before, but he had not joined the band in the morning. The chief thereupon sent the whole band, except Osman and Mehmet, to search the village and country around, giving them until sunset for their task. He then turned to Mehmet and said—

“I am sorry to make you a witness to an execution, but there is no alternative. You see how I am respected and loved by all these people. It is because, unlike the Turkish officials and soldiers, I pay for everything, and punish severely any robbery or insult on the part of any members of my band. Our very safety depends upon the favour with which

these peasants and mountaineers regard us. Besides, I have sincere affection for them, and during the past ten years have never had occasion to suspect their loyalty. This mad brute of a Persian shall soon atone for his crime, as everybody shall see.

“ The only other instance where I have had to act harshly was in the case of an Albanian who sought to betray me. There were then a great number of Albanian shepherds here in the meadow, and he conceived the plan of gradually substituting for them others of their race from Europe. Not knowing me, they would have had no scruples about taking my life ; and this treacherous member of my band hoped to enrich himself by my death or capture.

“ Presently I noticed many new faces in the meadow, but as they seemed to be stupid peasants I thought nothing of it. After some ten days one of these shepherds, who had received a marked kindness from my hands, determined to warn me. I well remember the evening when he came to the village where I was stopping. He called me aside and told the whole story, how after a day or two my Albanian traitor had arranged that we should sleep in the meadow, and that at the last prayers of the day the whole band of shepherds should rush upon us. The traitor himself guaranteed to seize

me, or, if necessary, to stab me while the others engaged the rest of the band.

"I ordered the friendly peasant to be carefully guarded, and summoned the traitor into my presence. I taxed him with his treachery, and he was not skilful enough to hide his confusion. I then ordered him to be bound, and that the band should surround the meadow, and at daybreak bring all the Albanian shepherds to the extreme end of it. I set out with my prisoner towards morning, and found my men had obeyed orders, and some fifty peasants were lined up against the foot of the mountain. I reproached them for their cowardice and treachery, and at sunrise gave the order to fire. In a moment the fifty-one men were lying dead or writhing upon the ground, the main culprit having been despatched by my own hand.

"I hired some peasants to bury the bodies in a great trench, and sent men to tell the owners of the flocks, which were now wandering in the meadow, to come and look after them themselves. Since that time I have had no trouble with my own men or with outsiders. They think my life is charmed. As for the Turkish troops which were sometimes sent against me, they only afforded us excellent rifle practice."

Harold was filled with horror and admiration at the recital : with horror at the mercilessness of the deed, and with admiration at the promptness and thoroughness of the action. It showed him, moreover, a new side of Ali's character ; and it was difficult to believe that this short, low-voiced man could at times be so formidable and sanguinary.

At this moment, some minutes before sunset, a band appeared, bringing in their midst a tall swarthy fellow, who, though evidently badly frightened, walked with a careless indifferent air.

Ali arose at once and walked towards him. " Hosein ! " he exclaimed, " you have disgraced my band by deeds worthy of a Cossack. You have until sunset to make your peace with Allah."

He then ordered a signal to be fired to call in the members of the band, and led the way to the place of execution at the extreme end of the meadow. They arrived shortly after sunset, and Hosein was bound to a stunted tree, at the same place where the Albanian traitor had been executed. Ali then commanded a file of men to face him, and a few moments afterwards poor Hosein lay limply in his cords.

Ali now returned to the walnut tree, where the Ousbashi's feast was smoking. He greeted the

officer cordially, and seemed to have forgotten the tragic scene which had just taken place. All ate heartily, except Mehmet, who found it difficult to swallow any of the savoury food. He had to admit some justice in the chief's action, but his soul abhorred unnecessary violence and bloodshed in any form. He was inclined somewhat to regret having entered the band, and only a review of Ali's good points induced him to remain.

The band lolled away the time next morning in smoking and chatting in the market-place. The midday meal consisted of bread and olives or garlic, and was eaten in the open. Each man bought a loaf of bread at one of the ovens, and a few olives at the *bakal* or grocery. Then they went to the branch-covered booth in the square, where they washed down their repast with muddy coffee.

Harold was rather appalled at the number of strong coffees he was required to drink each day, probably fifteen or twenty; and only life in the open air prevented him from becoming a nervous wreck. Coffee seemed to be the only dissipation of the Moslems, and it was produced in quantity on every occasion of feasting or rejoicing. Harold thought that coffee and cigarettes must form a conspicuous feature in a Moslem's paradise, where

they would doubtless be served by seductive houris almost every moment of the day.

After the noon siesta, Ali Effendi invited Mehmet to his home, where one of his two wives kept house. His host had wisely solved the problem of polygamy by separating his households by many miles. Ali's home in the mountains comprised a wife and two daughters, also a brother ten years of age. His nephew lived with him, too, and for general servant and guard there was a giant Moslem whose face was covered with scars. Mehmet did not see Ali's wife, but his daughters came and played with him, and the brother proved to be a very intelligent boy. Ali ordered the Porthos-like servant to make coffees, and reclined on a sofa, motioning Mehmet to a seat beside him.

"Welcome, brother Moslem," he cried in his lisping tone ; "let us converse a little about other lands. I regret I have never had opportunity for travel. It is true I have met many Europeans, particularly Englishmen ; but I have always wished to visit France, England and America, and see how these fortunate people are governed. Have you ever visited any of these countries, Mehmet ?"

"Yes," answered the visitor, "my father, before his untimely death, concentrated all his thought

and affection upon me ; perhaps because I was his only child ; perhaps because he thought I would have opportunities that he had never had. When I was eighteen years old he took me to Greece, to Italy, to France, to England. He had intended taking me to America, but the unfortunate climate of England brought on an illness which caused his death. I took his body back to Candia, where I gave it Moslem burial." Here Mehmet paused for a time and puffed at his cigarette.

" In Athens," he continued, " I was much interested in the fine city, with its steam tramways and beautiful buildings.

" I remembered too that it had once been in our possession, and felt some chagrin that it had been lost. Still, the Greeks are very friendly to us now, for some reason or other, perhaps because they have some axe to grind.

" Italy is a wonderful country, with fine ports and enormous shipping. Naples was a revelation to me. The largest city I had yet visited. Like Smyrna in many ways, if you place Mount Vesuvius in place of the " Two Brothers." This mountain throws up volumes of fire and rock, so that the earth comes down over the whole country. At night it is most wonderful, for rivers of fire, instead of

going up to the sky, flow down the sides of the mountain, and sometimes burn up the houses at the foot. The streets of Naples are full of wagons and carriages, electric trains run along, and *arabas*¹ of a strange kind are seen from time to time, which go by themselves, making a puffing noise like engines, and leaving a fearful smell behind. Then the city of Naples, though small for Europe, is large as compared with Smyrna. But I saw much that was unpleasant : millions of beggars, who begged everywhere, not as in Smyrna, where a few respectable people knock at the front doors of houses, and demand their alms. And then such drinking ! Everywhere men and women and children were drinking wine or brandy, and street fights were common.

“ In France I found more advance. Marseilles is a wonderful port with ships sailing to every part of the world. But when I reached Paris my astonishment was profound. My father, too, shared my amazement when we went one day to the top of a great iron statue called the “ Tower of Evil.” Why it was thus called I do not know ; it seemed very beautiful to me. The city below seemed to be purity itself, so white, so orderly, so beautiful ! The

¹ Wagons.

people appeared like flies as they walked on the pavement beneath. And yet I have heard that the French, though so artistic and refined, are very immoral : as bad or worse than the corrupt Moslems ; and that Allah is punishing them for their iniquities by a small birthrate.

“ I then crossed a very turbulent strait called the English Channel : it was very stormy, like the Aegean Sea in the winter. My father was very ill, and I was far from well. The train whirled us to London, the metropolis of the world. What a wonderful city it was ! Richer than Lydia, the ancient Aidin vilayet, with Moguls and Lazaruses all mixed up. My father took me to Whitehall, and afterwards to Whitechapel. In one place I saw nobility, in the other degradation. That seemed to me the most distinguishing characteristic, the nearer I approached to civilization. Great wealth, refinement, luxury—great poverty, squalor, barbarity ; and still in England there is a sincere attempt to provide for the unfortunate masses. Almshouses, sanatoriums, workshops, schools, are everywhere in evidence ; and did not Europe, Asia, Africa pour in their off-scourings continually, the problem of dealing with the poor would be easily solved.”

"But what about Crete?" asked Ali. "That is a country I can appreciate more fully. You must have become intimately acquainted with some of the Europeans there, and you have doubtless seen much of the foreign soldiers."

"Candia, the chief place of Crete," rejoined Mehmet, "is rather a poor sort of place compared with the European cities. The people are mostly Greeks, now that the Moslems have left the country, and a barbarous set of Greeks they are too. They are always fighting amongst themselves, or with the few Mohammedans who have remained, and the foreign troops are kept busy preserving order. The English are by far the most capable, especially a tribe who wear a strange costume, partly like the Greek and partly like that of our own mountaineers. They have a short jacket like ours, a kilt or skirt like the Greeks, the knees are bare, and they have leggings or stockings. They have no trousers, and in front they have some kind of a bag made of fur, which I suppose they keep their money in. They are very brave, and always want to be in the thick of trouble. They call themselves Scotch, and their language is like Arabic."

"Do they shoot well?" asked Ali.

"Yes," was the reply, "some of them are re-

markable shots. In fact there was a sort of champion among them who had won a great prize of two hundred pounds at a match at Bosley or Bisley in England. I saw him shoot one afternoon. A target two feet square was set up at a distance of five hundred yards. This soldier fired fifteen shots, all of which struck the target."

Ali Effendi was surprised when he heard of such skill, and said he would like to compete with such marksmen. "Would they give me a prize if I went to Bashley and beat the other marksmen?" he asked.

"I don't know," answered Mehmet, "but I think they would; for the English are very fair, and never seem vexed or jealous when others win from them."

"I can quite believe it," Ali rejoined. "I know some of the English families in Bournabat, and I admire them very much. They are honest like the true Turks, and are very generous. Take the Whites, the Paysons and the Lataines. What fine people they are! Always caring for the poor Moslems and Greeks in their own suburbs, and ever ready to respond to any special call. I would trust my life with any of these men, and would feel perfectly secure if I once had their word. If all

Christians were like them there would be some inducement for us to think of changing our faith, even if for no greater reason than to be more brotherly. They are not idolaters either, and worship only Allah and His prophet Jesus Christ, while most Christians worship pictures and images."

It was now time to repair to the meadow for rifle practice, and hear the reports of the outposts and couriers. Ali Effendi seemed to have acquired new dignity since his pardon. He walked like a governor, his head thrown farther back, and his chest expanded to the utmost. Harold was forced to admire his dauntless bearing, and knew it was not affected. Ali walked straight past the tree where Hosein had been executed such a short time before: but he seemed to have forgotten the affair already. He made no change in his walk, and chatted gaily with his companions.

The band stopped at the base of a high hill which was already in shadow. Ali first heard the reports of the outposts. They stated that nothing of note had occurred during the day, and they were then relieved and new men appointed in their places.

As they were preparing for the evening meal two scouts approached. The first reported that a part of Abdullah's band were terrorizing the country

at the extreme end of the range. Ali ordered a band of thirty men to march at once, and surround them the next night, and either kill or capture the lot. These men formed part of the host of Ali's former rival, and the new governor was glad of the opportunity of finishing their work. He told his party to wait a few hours as he intended going with them, for he felt he was getting rusty from inaction.

The second scout brought in a mounted Turkish officer who had a letter for Ali Effendi. The chief gave it to Mehmet to read, and it proved to be from the Vali's assistant, Farkouh Pasha. He said he was coming next day to have a private conference with Ali, and appointed a spring halfway up the mountain as a rendezvous. The news confirmed Ali in his intention.

"I can meet Farkouh Pasha," said he, "and then go on to Beindeer, arriving near the remnant of Abdullah's band before morning."

He now commanded Selim, his nephew, to take thirty men, and proceed at once to Beindeer, to reconnoitre the robber's position, and to meet him at midnight next day at a coffee-house near the foot of the mountain.

He next despatched scouts to different points on the range, with orders to acquaint him at once with

the advent of new bands, or regarding murders and irregularities on the part of natives. He clearly proposed to be the supreme ruler of this district of Turkey, and to have law and order respected everywhere.

Although it was almost dark, the usual course of rifle practice was gone through, and then the elaborate evening meal, which was always provided by Ali, was served. Again the sweet heather-fed lambs were picked to pieces by strong fingers ; again the nourishing pilaff, or rice, found lodgment in hungry stomachs together with creamy curds, while sweets and coffees filled up the cavities of men who really ate only once a day.

Only forty of the band now remained with their chief, the rest being on duty as scouts or away on their mission to Beindeer. After prayers Ali called Mehmet aside, and addressed him : " I perceive that you have had a good education, and that you read and write Osmanli very well. My band is so large that I cannot keep track of all of my accounts in my head, and my brother is too young to do it. Mustapha, my present treasurer, is an honest man, but he is too slow at figures to be of much help. I shall therefore make you my treasurer and secretary. I shall be specially glad of your

services as I am likely to have further business with Farkouh Pasha, and he can only wish to see me in order to benefit himself financially. Hereafter I shall leave all my accounts in your hands. Listen therefore and remember what I am about to tell you. I have ten thousand pounds placed as follows: Two thousand pounds buried in a cave in Samsun Dag, the place being known only to me and my lieutenant Osman; four thousand pounds buried in the plain at Mysa, and only my second wife shares the secret with me; two thousand pounds buried under a tree on Besh Parmak, and my nephew Selim alone was with me at its interment. I have one thousand pounds in the hands of a Belgian firm in Smyrna, who supply me secretly with ammunition. The balance, which consists of little over a thousand pounds, is at my house, and I will at once entrust it to your care, and make you responsible for it. I believe you are faithful and honest, for I can read human nature, and am satisfied with you. I have never made but one mistake in my judgment of men, and that was in the case of the Albanian traitor I told you of."

Here Ali paused a moment as if to allow Mehmet to remember the traitor's fate. He shuddered a little, but as he had no intention of robbing or

betraying Ali he was able to look him squarely in the face. The chief then proceeded—

“ You will make a list to-night of my men, eighty in number. You will credit me with ten pounds per month ; yourself with seven ; my lieutenant with six ; and each of my men, without regard to their rank or period of service, with five. This will make a little over four hundred pounds a month. You will see that our supply of ammunition is kept full ; that provisions are always at hand for a sudden move or retreat. You will also credit fifty pounds each month to charity, and I will tell you how and when to spend it.”

Thus did the clever Ali convey his whole inventory, and complete system of accounts, to his new treasurer in a few minutes' talk. He then took Mehmet to the rear of his house, where he showed him a large iron box hidden beneath the wall, and gave him the key. Ali then summoned his lieutenant Osman and his nephew Selim to the spot, and told them of Mehmet's appointment as treasurer. He further commanded them, on Mehmet's requisition, to show him the other hoards. Thus was the Anglo-American, Harold, placed in possession of half of Ali's fortune. Though the only effect of the trust was to increase his responsibility, Mehmet was

glad of it in one way, since it would bring him nearer to Ali's person, and would also raise him materially in the estimation of the other members of the band.

That night Mehmet obtained the names of the band from Osman, and at once made up his pay-roll, because he learned that the men would come for their stipends on Sunday, three days later. Mustapha was greatly relieved at the appointment of the new treasurer, and gladly turned over to him his balance, consisting of some thirty pounds and a few medjido. He told Mehmet that he felt ten years younger at being relieved of his responsibility, as he used to spend several hours a day counting up his chieftain's money, and trying to account for the sum which was always lacking till at last he remembered where he had spent it.

Harold soon saw that keeping the accounts would be mere child's play, but that the problem of carrying large sums in gold would be more difficult to solve. In the event of the band going on distant expeditions it might be necessary to carry several hundreds of pounds, and he of course would be held responsible. After thinking for some moments he decided to have a sleeveless jacket of leather made with some twenty or thirty small pockets sewn

on it, in which he might safely deposit large sums. The weight being so distributed would not be great and the jacket would also prove a protection against cold. He therefore went at once to the village cobbler, and choosing a soft strong piece of leather he set the man to work and promised him a pound if the garment was finished before daybreak.

As Harold lay in his blanket under the pine boughs which formed the roof of the booth, the events of the last three days passed in rapid review before him. A few evenings ago he had been sitting on the quay in Smyrna, thinking of brigands (if the idea ever crossed his mind) as he would of pigmies in the dark forests of Africa, or of the Changushes in the wilds of Manchuria. Now he was among Turkish brigands ; more, he was the treasurer of the band. With Anglo-Saxon adaptability he had entered fully into the life. He already felt like a Turk, and even thought in Turkish. On the whole he was glad he had come. He had learnt more of Turkey in the last few days than in the twenty previous years of his existence in Smyrna.

He admired Ali Effendi in many ways, and he certainly could not complain of his treatment by the chief and the other members of the band.

"In a month," thought Harold, "I can see as

much of Ali and of the real interior life as I could see in an age in any other capacity ; enough at least to give me food for thought and conversation for many years. I must now be on the look-out for an opportunity to efface myself honourably. I perceive that it may be much more difficult for me to leave the band than it was to enter it. What a nuisance that Ali made me his treasurer ! I should not want to take away any of his money, and I could not consign my trust to any of his band without arousing suspicion. If I should go to Smyrna I might leave it in his agent's hands there, but before Ali could hear of its safe delivery he would think me a thief and an ingrate, and I am anxious to retain his good opinion. Well, I must allow events to take their course, and if I cannot get away without compromising myself within a month, I suppose I must remain Ali's confidant and treasurer until a good chance presents itself."

Harold now thought of good old Ray in Smyrna, and of his solicitude for his protégé's safety. He rose and wrote a note in Osmanli to his friend—

" MY DEAR ABDUL,

" Your hopes are realized. Behold me a member of Ali Effendi's band, and what is more, the treasurer.

Ali Effendi is a man and a true Moslem, which is the highest praise I can give. I am charmed with the life here and with my associates, who appear to be honest. I have witnessed some scenes which startled me, but on the whole I am forced to approve *or be neutral*. The mountain air and the primitive life are intoxicating. I walk on air. Yet I feel that there will be a reaction, and know that my Aryan blood will not find pleasure in an eternity of Turkish association.

"I hope to see you after the month is past, yet my high position has its drawbacks, and I may see fit to remain in Ali's employ for many months. I think often of you, good old Abdul, and long to see you again. If you have any news from Crete, or from our friends at Smyrna, send it at once.

"Your brother and friend,

"MEHMET."

He gave the letter to a pedlar who was going to Mysa at midnight for the market next day, and then went to sleep. His mind was freed from all care, and he slept until the call to prayers sounded next morning.

He rose already dressed, and went first to the cobbler's, where he found his money-jacket ready.

After prayers he showed his new garment to Ali, who was much pleased at the practical nature and forethought of his factor.

“ You are prudent,” he cried, “ for we had best take six hundred pounds with us on our visit to Farkouh Pasha, though I hope we may be lucky enough to bring it back. If not I must get it back again from some rich Turk.”

After a short speech from Ali Effendi, each man bought a supply of bread and cheese, and the band started on their six-mile walk, Mehmet first taking seven hundred pounds from the iron box in Ali's garden.

CHAPTER IV

FARKOUH PASHA

THE band now retraced their steps of some days before, crossing the low divide into the parallel plain and then climbing to the Kiz Geul mountain. It was now fresh and cool, and the well-fed and perfectly rested men walked with springy step. On arriving at the top of the pass two striking scenes claimed Mehmet's attention.

On the left spread out the flat fertile plain of Mysa. The mountain here fell away abruptly, and at its base began the smooth sea of verdure that extended for many leagues like the ocean, until it rose again to the sky-line. The sun had not yet risen, but the dawn was visible in the vault above. The distant mountains were being touched by the awakening blaze, appearing like new-lit fires sparkling through the mist. On the right a fairer scene was disclosed. Kiz Geul lay like a mirror in the meadow, and Mehmet could see in it the cypresses

and the mountains of the opposite shore. All was quite still, even the flocks of sheep and the herds of buffalo were yet lying on the ground. The faithful sheep dogs alone were alert, and barked from time to time to inform the wolves and jackals of their vigilance.

The band breakfasted at the edge of the mountain, and Ali sent five scouts to watch for Farkouh's approach, and to let him know how many men attended him. He also sent other scouts in different directions, determining that, if his pardon had been granted only to lull him into carelessness and security, the design would be frustrated by his watchfulness.

After prayers at sunrise, the band slowly descended the mountain side, and at about ten o'clock they arrived at the spring. Here a wait of an hour was made, and two of the scouts came in, reporting that Farkouh Pasha was approaching with a guard of ten men. Ali seemed pleased at the parasite's promptness, as he wished to set out at one o'clock for Beindeer. He clearly anticipated more pleasure from the meeting with the robbers from Abdullah's band than from the rendezvous with Farkouh.

The dignitary arrived soon, bright and smiling,

his breast still covered with decorations. Ali Effendi saluted him with less deference than on his previous visit, which had taken place at the Konak in Mysa.

He invited him to a seat beneath the great plane tree, where the omnipresent coffees were waiting.

Ali then went through the customary salutations, inquiring about Farkouh's health and that of the Vali. The visitor answered graciously, and went on—

“The Vali commanded me to speak with you concerning some small bands of outlaws who are troubling the people in the plain, and to request you to capture or exterminate them. If you think it wise you are empowered to offer them a pardon, if not you can deal with them as you wish.”

Ali Effendi then told Farkouh Pasha that he had already sent men to surround Abdullah's band, and that he would himself dispose of them that night.

“Very good,” answered Farkouh; “my superior and the Padishah will be pleased to learn of your activity and zeal, and I am sure that we can at once report that quiet and order have been restored in this district.

"By the way," he observed, "I do not see why our little dealings in the past should be discontinued. You know that much money is needed for *backsheesh* at Constantinople, to silence adverse criticism, and to keep our way open to the royal ear. It is now over a month since our last transaction, and I ought to send a large sum at once to my agent, the chief eunuch, especially as His Majesty is now rather unwell, and it is consequently more difficult to keep him informed of the satisfactory way in which matters are going in this province. I may have to go to the capital myself in the course of a week, and it is probable that I could secure you a commission in the army or in the secret service for a small sum."

Ali Effendi listened attentively to this talk which he had expected. He replied—

"Your Excellency must know how grateful I feel to you for your services in my behalf, and if you can only show me how I can repay this debt I shall be only too glad to do so. You must also know that the maintenance of my large band is a very heavy expense to me, and requires much ready money. It is now being used entirely in the service of the Government, and I must reserve any small means I may have to make that service effective. If you

can suggest any new source of revenue I shall be most grateful."

Farkouh Pasha's smile underwent a gradual eclipse as he listened to Ali's respectful apology. He had thought to find in the ex-brigand an easy victim, and was disappointed to find in him a greater tactician than himself. He lighted a cigarette to hide his disappointment, and rejoined—

"There are two Moslems at Tireh whom we suspect of belonging to the Young Turkey party, and whom the secret agents of His Majesty have denounced. Tireh is just across the plain, and, since you are in a way an officer of the Government, you might have them brought to your village in the mountain, and interrogate them closely. It may be they have collected funds for carrying out their nefarious designs, since they are reported to be very wealthy. It would be well to seize any money they may have, and to require them to produce any hidden sums, as their property will of course be confiscated if they are convicted. You can then entrust one-third of any sum you obtain to my keeping, and if you consider them guilty I shall send it to Stamboul. There is also an Armenian in Mysa who was implicated in last summer's plot. He is said to be treasurer of an Armenian Revolutionary Society,

and is known to have a large sum on him at present. The Armenians are very subtle and dangerous, and this man, Toolian, ought not to be left longer at large. I would therefore strongly recommend that you take these three men into custody, and at once get possession of their money. You will thereby draw their fangs, and thus render them powerless for evil."

Farkouh Pasha here smiled sweetly, and gave Ali a minute account of the houses of the doomed persons. He even offered to send Turkish soldiers to guide Ali's men to their prey. Ali, however, declared that guides would be unnecessary, as he had no difficulty in finding men when he wanted them. For his suggestion, he thanked the Pasha, who mounted his horse and, after many effusive words, left for Mysa.

Ali seemed much relieved at his departure. He disliked this fawning hound, and it had been an effort for him to preserve his composure through the interview. He was pleased, however, with the result of the meeting. He had not been obliged to part with his six hundred pounds, and he had moreover found a way of increasing his stock of gold without leaving his headquarters.

It was with a buoyant spirit that he gave the

command to set out for Beindeer. They first skirted the plain, where some footpaths made walking comparatively easy. The sun shone full upon the pedestrians, and as there was but little shade from occasional trees Mehmet soon found his leather money-jacket was a nuisance. He took it off at last and hung it on his rifle, where its weight was little felt. After a walk of six hours the band stopped for prayers, and had some refreshments. Bread and cheese or olives were produced, and a large basket of luscious cherries were bought from a peasant and added to the meal.

Another two hours' march brought them in sight of Beindeer, nestling at the foot of the mountain ; and here a scout was met, who reported to Ali that the robbers were encamped at a spring higher up the mountain, and some three hours' walk from their present position. There were twenty of them, and Ali's men were now stationed in a grove about a mile above them.

Ali Effendi commanded the scout to return to his companions, and tell them to remain in the grove, and he would join them at once.

Mehmet now put on his money-jacket as the sun was setting. The ascent was made with little difficulty, and the two bands were joined at about nine

that His Majesty is far from well, and that a change is imminent in the Government. It is evident that a union of our bands will be mutually advantageous. If you wish, I shall accept you on an equal standing with my own companions."

The robber leader was a man of some sense. He knew that Ali had the upper hand, and that, although he could not see them, there were sixty or seventy rifles ready to be fired through the trees at Ali's signal. He also knew Ali to be an honest man, and was only too glad to end his vagrant and precarious life by entering the great chief's employ. He therefore repeated Ali's offer in a loud voice, and while he was doing so Ali's keen eye swept the throng of swarthy faces. There were several men who, from personal enmity or from dislike of discipline, did not take kindly to the offer, and Ali marked them out for future dealing. The others gladly accepted Ali's proposal, and the chief then sent Mehmet to call in the rest of the band. He purposely made some delay, and it was not until late in the night that the united bands lay down to sleep. Ali told some of his men to watch the marked outlaws, and after a little the fading moon looked down into sleeping faces through the sparse branches of stunted firs, and wolves or jackals had to seek other drinking places.

The sun had already risen next day when the throng of faithful men and renegades started on their long march back to Samsun Dagħ. At Kiz Geul Ali Effendi sent a note to be telegraphed to Farkouh Pasha, informing him of his successful expedition, and requesting that pardons be sent at once to Mysa for the trusty men.

He also sent men to seize the two Moslems at Berge, and others to bring Toolian from Mysa. The march was then resumed, and the tired company reached the market-place in Samsun Dagħ at about sunset. Ali Effendi now ordered Mehmet to give each of the new recruits two pounds. He called them up separately, and told them that any irregularities would be punished by death; that every article must be fully paid for, and that they must at once repair any damage to their equipment or costume.

Next day Ali went to Mysa accompanied by his treasurer, his lieutenant, and the remnant of Abdullah's band. They arrived at the Konak at noon, and Ali obtained pardons from the Governor at Smyrna for all the trusty men. The others he spoke to the Kaimakam about, and recommended that they should be sent to Smyrna and imprisoned and exiled.

Next morning he appeared again at his headquarters at Samsun Dagħ. His step was light and he seemed as fresh and self-possessed as if he had just come from his home. Indeed Mehmet found him always so. Fatigue and privation had no terrors for him. The Spartan training of the past years had given him an iron frame, and his conscious rectitude (judged by oriental standards) gave him always a calm and equable disposition.

The band was now increased to one hundred, and Mehmet was instructed to add their names to his pay-roll, which was to be liquidated the next Friday—the Moslem Sunday.

During the next day Ali's time was fully occupied in hearing the reports of his scouts, in disciplining his new recruits, whom he found to be very bad shots, and in attending to the disputes of the country people. His scouts, who had spread to the remoter districts, reported the existence of small bands of outlaws, who were immediately suppressed and sent to Smyrna. He did not wish to enlarge his band unduly. He went unconsciously on the principle of the early Greeks, that as a small city well governed was better than a large city badly governed, so a small band perfectly disciplined was more effective than a huge Persian host.

Several robberies and one murder also claimed his attention, and swift vengeance was meted out. On the fourth day after Farkouh's "suggestions," the two Moslems and the Armenian, Toolian, were brought before the new mountain magistrate. Ali Effendi received them coldly. He reproached them for their nefarious designs.

"You see in my person," he lisped, "a man who, though often maligned, is bending all his energies to establish order and security in his district. You, on the other hand, bear good names and yet are plotting against His Gracious Majesty, and are trying to enrich yourselves by destroying your country. I have full evidence of your guilt, and have been commanded to execute judgment upon you. What have you to say for yourselves before my decree is carried out?"

One of the prisoners was a consumptive-looking man of about fifty. He threw himself on the ground at Ali's feet and covered his head with dust, exclaiming—

"Your Excellency, I beseech you not to be deceived into doing a great injustice. I am a loyal subject of the Sultan, and have never said a word or even had a thought against him. I have lived on my estate ever since I returned from the army, and

have never left it except for short visits to Smyrna in the summer, to sell my figs and raisins. These reports about my treachery are the lies of some envious enemy, and I hope never to dwell in paradise if there is an atom of truth in them."

"But," replied Ali Effendi, "my information concerning you has come from the highest authority, and I have been commanded to execute you at once. As I am unwilling, however, to shed the blood of a fellow-Moslem except in defence of my own life, I shall take upon myself the responsibility of sparing you for the present. Your property nevertheless will be confiscated, and the sums that you have collected for the overthrow of the State shall be used in its defence. It may be that the Government will consider you unable to do further harm if you are deprived of the means therefor. You will accordingly send instantly to your home, and within forty-eight hours have one thousand pounds to hand me for transmission to Stamboul, or I shall execute you as a traitor."

The man, who was something of a miser, tried to speak further, but Ali ordered him to be removed and sent Mustapha, the former treasurer, to see that he wrote at once for the money.

The other Moslem was a man about forty years old.

He had listened intently to the examination of his companion, and judged that words would be only wasted on such an implacable judge as Ali proved to be. He therefore stood silently before him, and the new governor addressed him as follows :—

“ Rebel ! you have been denounced as the companion and abettor of this traitor who has just been dragged from my presence. You have heard my judgment in his case. Be thankful that you have in me a merciful Moslem judge, and be grateful for your reprieve. If within forty-eight hours one thousand pounds in gold is not placed in my hands by your agents, you shall perish on the very spot where you now stand.”

The man murmured “ Kismet,” and withdrew ; and Ali motioned the late Abdullah’s corporal to attend him.

The Armenian revolutionist was now brought forward. He had heard Ali’s judgment in the two previous cases, and hoped to get off as easily. He therefore offered the one thousand pounds if he might be set at liberty.

Ali Effendi heard him coldly and then replied—

“ Infidel, do not think that you are to be included in the easy terms which have been granted to these misguided Moslems. Their plots are not against

the life of their ruler, and they do not resort to the refuge of coward's dynamite and poison. You have grown rich in preying upon the ignorant peasants. You have cheated your own co-religionists by exacting large sums for their liberation. Thus you have robbed Moslem and Christian alike, and now you seek to destroy the country that has enriched you. You do not care how many innocent people are blown to fragments if you can only gratify your desires."

The Armenian trembled with fear as he heard these words. He was afraid they were a preface to torture or death, and it is possible his conscience told him there was some truth in Ali's charges. He tried to mutter some apology, to beg for mercy, but his tongue refused to shape the words. Ali Effendi regarded him sternly for a moment, and then remarked—

"I see that you have no courage, and that if you are impoverished you will be rendered as harmless as the dog that slinks in the gutter. Send to Mysel at once and get your tainted treasure. I am informed that you have two thousand pounds in gold. If this sum is placed in my hands before sunset, to-morrow I will set you at liberty."

The man at once promised that the money should be forthcoming ; and Ali ordered two men to guard

him and afford him facilities for communicating with Mysa.

Ali then turned to Mehmet, who had watched the scenes with disgusted gaze. Ali noted his abhorrence at the proceedings, and took his arm and walked with him back to the village.

“ My friend,” he confided, as they threaded the narrow paths, “ I see that these measures are not to your liking. They ‘ squeeze my soul ’ too, and I am sorry to be forced to employ them. But what can I do? I am obliged to send large sums to Farkouh Pasha. I must provide for my band, for at any time I may be obliged to employ it in my defence. The Government has pardoned me, but it gives me nothing to live upon, and instead levies merciless blackmail upon me. If it were not for these circumstances, I could easily live upon what I have stored up; for I do not care for money, and my simple mode of living has not changed a particle since I have acquired large sums.

“ In the old days I never exacted money from men who could not easily afford to pay it, but levied a hundred pounds here and there from the rich men who had no use for it and would never miss it. I do not think I have been very exorbitant in my demands to-day. Each of these men could have

paid double the amount. What I dislike is to be forced to act on the suggestions of Farkouh Pasha, and to use paltry excuses and make fictitious charges to cover the deceit. But, such is fate. I might have been a simple peasant working my farm on the plain beneath, had not fate made an outlaw of me and forced me to do deeds which are distasteful to my nature.

“What else fate has in store for me I know not. I have no regret for the past and no fear for the future. My conscience is clear. I have never wronged or betrayed a friend, and fate and my unworthy fellow-creatures must take the blame of any crimes that have been done in my name.”

Mehmet was much interested in this confidence; it showed the workings of the Moslem conscience. It explained Ali's free carriage and noble look. It also explained the sincere devotion of Ali at prayers: for Mehmet had no doubt that Ali was sincere in his declarations, and that his soul was at ease in the presence of its Maker.

Mehmet's feelings were continually undergoing periods of admiration and regard for his chief, alternating with moments of strong disapprobation and disgust. He really wished to retain his respect for Ali, and yet, after such scenes as he had just

witnessed, he found it difficult to restrain the words of condemnation that rose to his lips.

"Another week," thought he, "and I must try to escape from this band. If not, some betraying words will endanger my life, or the atmosphere will end by demoralizing me. I had perhaps better take my first chance to escape, even if it is offered to-morrow. I have seen more than enough of Ali already."

But next morning Mehmet viewed matters in a more indulgent light. He realized that he would feel deep regret in going back to the humdrum, artificial life in Smyrna. After all, the phlegmatic natures of the two Moslems would suffer but little from the fright of the previous day. They would not be wholly ruined either. As for the Armenian he had doubtless been frightened as badly before ; all the members of his nation in Turkey lived in constant dread of robbery or murder.

Then too was the responsibility really Ali's ? He would never have sunk to such means on his own initiative, and Mehmet's knowledge of history enabled him to recall numberless illustrations of Christians, who had been guilty of infinitely greater barbarities when moved solely by their lust for lucre. Still, he greatly deplored the necessity of such violence, and his experiences of the past prepared him

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to expect almost anything in the future. He anticipated but little pleasure during the coming days, unless in the discharge of his duties as treasurer, which at least were blameless ; and he hoped to be able to prevent the doing of any specially outrageous wrong while he was in the band.

It was pay-day and Mehmet's morning was fully taken up. He withdrew five hundred pounds from the iron box, and stowed them in the many pockets of his jacket. The whole band with the exception of a few outposts then filed by. Ali Effendi led the throng and received his ten pounds first. As Mehmet's name was second on the list he drew his salary and placed it in his purse. Osman then received the sum due to him, and the others followed, wondering where the Cretan treasurer kept his money, for Mehmet put his hand into his bosom each time and drew forth the exact sum.

The arms of the men were now inspected, and the tale of cartridges counted, and new supplies issued. As Abdullah's band was still in rather a sorry state Ali ordered new costumes to be made for them, and the village tailor was at once set to work.

Mehmet and Ali then went to their magazine, and examined the store of ammunition and provisions.

They counted the rifles and found the fifty in good condition. There were six thousand cartridges packed in zinc-lined boxes and eighty long hunting knives were piled in one corner in their red leather sheaths.

As for provisions, there were one hundred and twenty sacks of flour weighing ten pounds each, fifty-two small sacks of rice, and about one hundred pounds of coffee, unroasted, and packed in leather bags. A supply of coarse salt and cheese completed the inventory, and Mehmet noted that everything was put up in small parcels, so that all might be picked up and carried off at a moment's notice.

"I have also," said Ali, "a supply of ammunition and provisions stored in a cave about halfway up the mountain, so that even if we were forced to abandon these we should not be entirely destitute. But I have little fear of a surprise, for even if my scouts failed to inform me of danger, I am sure that some of the friendly mountaineers and peasants would warn me at once of any movement of troops in this direction. Then, too, I have agents in Smyrna and even in Stamboul, though I place little reliance on any but my own band and my sturdy friends amongst the people of the district. I am satisfied that I shall never die from a Turkish bullet, unless I am forced to leave this district where I

have warm friends and know each foot of the country."

That evening at sunset a man arrived from the plain, escorted by two of Ali's outposts, and asked for Toolian. Ali Effendi ordered him to wait where he was, and sent a soldier to fetch the Armenian. The latter came running to Ali's house, fearing that by some mishap the money had not been obtained. He spoke to the new-comer in Armenian, and was replied to in the same tongue with the good news that the sum was there. He then drew two bulging canvas bags from his bosom, and Toolian took them and handed them to Ali Effendi, saying in Turkish—

"Here you will find two thousand pounds; be good enough to have it counted at once, and permit me to return to my family, who will be in torture until they see me safe again."

Ali ordered Mehmet to inspect the contents of the bags, which he did, saying that the sum was right. The Armenian was then dismissed, and the money was placed in the iron box.

"Leave it there," commanded Ali, "until we see the result of the Moslems' requisitions. We can then decide how much of it to send to Farkouh Pasha, and how much of it to bury."

The two Moslems showed some anxiety next morning, as they feared that the huge sum of two thousand pounds might not be found in Tireh. They had sent letters to all their friends entreating them to give what they could, and had even ordered their sons to go, if necessary, to Smyrna and borrow the money. The older Turk was quite wealthy and could doubtless obtain his one thousand pounds, but the younger man had put most of his money out to interest and it was doubtful if he could raise the sum at such short notice.

At noon two hodjas arrived. One of these asked for the older Turk, and handed him a small wooden box. The consumptive's eyes lighted up as he opened it, and though miserly he hastened to give it to Ali. The other hodja approached the younger captive with despair written on his countenance, and Mehmet's heart sank within him as he noted the resigned look on the unfortunate prisoner's face.

"With all our efforts," whispered the hodja, "we were unable to obtain more than eight hundred pounds. Perhaps you can prevail on Ali Effendi to wait a few days for the rest. I myself will speak to him, and perhaps he will listen to me."

The Moslem signified assent, and the hodja approached Ali, and spoke in a low tone as follows—

"Whoever your informants are, I can testify on the Koran that my friend is guiltless of any conspiracy against the Government. Accept this sum then, or give us some delay, and Allah will reward your mercy with like favour at the last day."

Ali Effendi thought for a moment, and then called Mehmet aside.

"How much money have you in your jacket?" he asked.

"Five hundred pounds," answered Mehmet.

"Very well," continued Ali, "take out two hundred pounds, and slip it into this bag when you open it to pour the money out. You can then count it openly, and declare the sum complete. It is fatal to my reputation to go back on my word, and in this way I can spare the man and yet preserve my name."

Mehmet was wonderfully relieved at this happy solution of the difficulty; he had feared that a dastardly crime was about to be committed. He did as directed, and poured out the whole sum on the ground, and counted the full thousand pounds. The Turk and the hodja were astonished, but Ali Effendi spoke before they could frame a sentence.

"Let this experience be a warning to you; you may both go for the present"—for both Moslems were

now standing before him—"but be sure that if ever you are called into my presence again there will be no reprieve."

Ali decided to send only five hundred pounds to Farkouh Pasha, as he feared exciting his cupidity by too large a gift. He then sent Osman to bury a part in the cave with the other hoard, and gave the rest to Mehmet for expenses.

A great feast was held in the meadow next evening, to which were invited the Ousbashi and his men, all the hodjas and chief men of the village, and a number of the peasants and mountaineers. Some three hundred men sat down to dinner in thirty small circles, and all the boys and beggars in the village hovered round about. After the meal the men smoked and chatted, while the hangers-on attended to the débris of the feast.

After sunset the crowd washed at the brook, lining it on both sides for many yards, and then moved to a level spot in the meadow, and laid their rifles beside them, while a venerable muezzin led them in prayers.

It was quite dark when they started back to the village, and as they were stumbling along in the dry river-bed a huge cloud burst over Samsun Dag. The bald summit of the mountain was lit up by the

lightning's flashes, and a wall of water tore down through the pines. Before the crowd could all retreat to higher ground the flood rushed upon them, and three youths were carried before it and dashed to death on the boulders that encumbered the stream. A fitting harbinger of the stormy times that were about to encompass Ali and his band !

CHAPTER V

THE WARNING AND THE DEPARTURE

NEXT evening a messenger arrived from Mysa with a note from the Kaimakam to Ali Effendi. It stated that an English family, living at an emery mine at some distance from the city, had been molested by outlaws. The Englishman had come at once to Mysa, and telegraphed to the British Consul at Smyrna, upon whose requisition the Vali had sent a regiment of soldiers to guard the family and to exterminate the outlaws. The Kaimakam added that he knew Ali Effendi had been unable to prevent the unhappy incident, and hoped there would be no complications arising from it.

Ali was much amazed at hearing of this event, as he knew what trouble might arise from any menace to European interests. He called the messenger, who was a Turkish corporal, and learnt from him the whole story.

It seemed that an outlaw had his home in Mysa,

where his father and family lived. Some peasants came to the house one night and killed the old father, and frightened the wife and children very badly. When the outlaw returned he was alarmed for their safety, and so took them to the Englishman's house, and threatened him with death if he did not protect his family. The Englishman was naturally alarmed, and telegraphed to Smyrna for guards. The affair was comparatively simple in itself ; but, as a rich English Company owned the mine, there was danger lest the Ambassador at Constantinople might make capital of the incident, as he had been snubbed repeatedly by the Porte and was losing patience.

The threatened occupation of Smyrna by the Mediterranean fleet had put an end to the Sinai boundary dispute, and the Ambassador might now press for the complete pacification of the vilayet, since English residents in Smyrna were now afraid to walk or ride outside of the immediate precincts of their grounds.

Ali Effendi ordered Mehmet to write a note of thanks to the Kaimakam, and to offer the services of his band if it would be of any use in the foothills or plains. The officer departed, and the men retired to rest.

In the morning a peasant from Mysa brought a note to Mehmet from Ray. It was written in Osmanli, and ran as follows—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—

“I was much pleased to get your note, and to know that you are well, and that you like your surroundings. I am sorry to inform you that I am ill with malaria, and would be very glad if you could come to me at once. You remember how ill I was in Crete at the time Candia was occupied by the British troops, and the constant firing made it impossible for me to sleep. If Ali Effendi can possibly spare you, make no delay in coming, as your presence here will relieve me of half my anxiety about my illness. I hear that our old friend Timour has left for Mysa with the troops, and that Achmet may be sent with his comrades from Macedonia to the same place. I shall expect you in two or three days, so do not disappoint me.

“Your friend,

“ABDUL.”

Mehmet read the note several times, and was at a loss to understand it. It was a warning couched in simple terms. There was danger, not so much from the regiment now in the plain as from the

regular troops from Macedonia. The appeal to return to Smyrna was urgent, and Ray would expect him. The man who brought the letter was, of course, in Ray's employ and so might be trusted.

Harold was at this time sitting in the pine-covered booth. He ordered a coffee, and lit a cigarette, that he might think over the matter in the fullest possession of his faculties. There was evidently danger in remaining with Ali Effendi. The peasant, who was doubtless a man of intelligence and resource, was sitting opposite him, eating his morning meal of bread and olives. Should he not go with him at once, when the scouts were weary with their night's vigil and he could easily avoid them or impose on their credulity? He saw that he could not get Ali's permission to go; for, even if the request did not arouse suspicion, he believed Ali would not willingly part with his honest and efficient treasurer, whom he evidently loved.

Then, too, Harold felt a real reluctance at leaving the band at the first signal of danger. He wanted to stay awhile, and see what would happen, and how Ali would conduct himself if hostilities were threatened. There was also some regret at the thought of leaving Ali himself. Though the chief had many faults, he also had many noble qualities; and

Harold had been greatly touched by Ali's action in the case of the younger Moslem. There would probably be little danger in remaining a few days longer, and there was nothing to attract him to Smyrna except his love for Ray.

He inhaled the cool morning air, and glanced at the peak above, which could be seen through a rift in the roof of the booth. The sun was shining on its cap of snow, and it seemed to beckon him to remain, and not go back to the stifling city.

He resolved to remain. He further determined to go to Ali and read him the letter, for he delighted in his dual personality—that of the able, well-educated Anglo-American, and that of the simple intelligent Moslem. He told the peasant to wait for a few hours, and then went to Ali's house, where he was immediately admitted.

The redoubtable brigand was sitting on the floor, playing with his children and his younger brother. He continued his recreation for a few minutes, and then sent the young people into the garden. He rolled a cigarette and passed the box to Mehmet, saying—

“I suppose that fate has new experiences in store for us. Just as everything seemed quiet and settled, this absurd action on the part of a crazy

Turk, has reopened the whole difficulty. For the first time in years, although the whole country has been swarming with outlaws, an Englishman has been frightened ; and lo ! a regiment of soldiers has been despatched to calm his fears, while the British Consul has been roused to action, as if the first Moslem outlaw in the history of the country had appeared on the scene.

“ This is what every well-wisher to the Government has tried to avoid. Men may rob or murder as much as they like in Turkey, for all any European power cares, so long as its own sacred subjects are not molested. And now comes some stupid brute, and upsets all our calculations by his ill-advised action. What the end may be only Allah knows.”

Mehmet expressed sympathy with Ali's disturbed state of mind, and read him his letter from Smyrna, asking what the reference to Macedonia meant.

Ali listened attentively to the reading, asking Mehmet to re-read certain portions. The suspicion that he was entertaining an Anglo-American unawares was never aroused. For who could suspect this frank simple young man who spoke Turkish perfectly, and was so devout in his worship, of being a Western infidel ?

Ali thought for some time, and presently observed—

"It may be that the Stamboul authorities have been roused to unheard-of activity by the British Ambassador. I know they want England's assent to the increase of the Customs' tariff, and to secure this they have already given the extension concession to the Aidin Railway Company. The Ambassador, alarmed at this trivial occurrence at the emery mine, may also have stipulated that the vilayet be cleared of present and pardoned outlaws, and the Porte may have ordered a large body of regular troops to be sent to Smyrna, to please the Ambassador. I am sure that this movement, if the news be true, is directed against me; and I am equally sure that the Sultan must be very ill or he would not violate a pardon to please any giaour. Well, we shall soon know the truth.

"What answer do you propose to make to your friend?" continued Ali.

"I am very unwilling to leave you," answered Mehmet, "especially as you may require my services at this critical time. It is true that I should like to be with my friend in his hour of woe, as he has very severe attacks of fever, and is not strong. Still, I must be guided by your will,"

Ali replied at once—

"You must stay with me. I need your services,

and there is no pressing call for your presence at Smyrna. If your friend is poor and needs medical attendance or change, I shall be glad to give my charity contribution for the month to you for him. Send him fifty pounds anyway, and then you can be sure that he will not lack for anything that money can buy. If matters quiet down, and he continues ill, I will send you later for a few days."

Mehmet thanked him for his sympathy and generosity, and returned to the booth, where he indited the following epistle to Ray :—

" MY DEAR ABDUL,—

" I was very sorry to learn that you are ill, and my heart yearns to be with you. I read your letter to Ali Effendi, and he said that he could not spare me now. He gave me fifty pounds to send you, and said that you could get all necessary attendance or change with that. He has moreover promised me a furlough if matters quiet down and if you continue ill. I am greatly pleased with my work here, and find absorbing interest in the life. I am keeping my wits about me, and have no fear of future events. If you are worse let me know, and I am sure my chief will let me go for a few days.

" Your friend,

" MEHMET."

Mehmet then gave the note to the peasant with a fee of one lire, and ordered him to send it at once to Smyrna.

The day was passed by Ali and his band in the usual way. Reports from the scouts were attended to, disputes were settled, and the customary rifle practice was indulged in. Mehmet was unable to distinguish any change in Ali's demeanour. There was the same noble and easy carriage; the same low tones of speech; the same swift and able decisions. A larger number of guards were posted however; and Selim, Ali's nephew, was sent to Mysa to interview the Kaimakam, and to bring back to Ali Effendi the news from the plain or from Smyrna.

Next morning Selim returned with a Turkish officer from Smyrna, who had arrived by the noon train. While the officer was being entertained, Ali Effendi learned from his nephew that a hundred soldiers had been put on guard at the mine, and that others had been posted around the city. One detachment had surprised a band of outlaws in a coffee-house, and had killed all of them. Selim also informed his uncle that the Kaimakam was ignored by the Colonel in charge of the troops, and knew nothing of what had been done, or what was about to happen.

Ali Effendi now interviewed the Turkish official, asking first about his health and his journey up the mountain, and then concerning the health of the Vali and of Farkouh Pasha.

The officer answered that the journey had been pleasant, since he had made the ascent in the cool of the night and in the company of Selim. The Vali was well, and Farkouh Pasha was about to leave for Constantinople, and had given him an important letter for Ali Effendi. He then drew a letter from his breast, and handed it to the chief.

Ali commanded his nephew to take the officer to the village, and to show him every courtesy. He then gave the letter to Mehmet, who read the epistle aloud :

“ ALI EFFENDI,—

“ I have heard with regret and dismay of the unhappy incident at the emery mine. The Vali Pasha has been obliged to send a body of troops to Mysa ; and the Stamboul authorities are much disturbed at this insignificant occurrence. I have just received a telegram from Constantinople stating that a regiment of regular troops is about to be despatched to Smyrna from Salonica with orders to kill or capture every brigand within the

precincts of the Aidin vilayet. The commander of the troops is to have supreme authority as to their use. Of course you and your band are supposed to be faithful subjects ; but who knows what may happen if this rash Colonel is sent to your district with *carte blanche* ? I believe it is not too late to change the destination of this body : and as I am going to Stamboul the day after to-morrow at four o'clock, there is plenty of time for my messenger to return to Smyrna, and hand me your reply to my proposition. If you send me two thousand pounds, I will guarantee that the troops shall never land in Smyrna, and the transport conveying them shall proceed to Yemen or Tripoli. If by any chance you are unable to send this sum, I shall, of course, be powerless to prevent the proposed measures. May Allah guide you in your decision, and preserve you always.

“ FARKOUH PASHA.”

Ali had arisen, and was walking to and fro while Mehmet read the letter ; when he had finished he sat down, and smoked for a time. He then addressed Osman and Mehmet—

“ I am satisfied that Farkouh Pasha has no power to change the orders that have already been given regarding the despatch of troops to Smyrna, and

that he only wishes to make a last levy on my treasure. As we may need all our gold during the next few months, I shall refuse his proposition and let him do as he thinks best in the matter."

Ali then dictated a letter to Farkouh Pasha, deploring the unfortunate trend of events, and regretting that he was unable to accept his proposal. He stated that he failed to see how he could be affected by the advent of any troops into the vilayet as he had received a pardon from the head of the empire, and was conscious of absolute rectitude since it was issued. He added that though he could not send Farkouh Pasha the sum proposed, he would be grateful for his good offices, and would show his gratitude at a later date.

"This," he said, when the letter was finished, "is the only answer I can send. It is certain no reliance can be placed on this parasite. We must look to our own resources, and at once make provision for the future. Write at once, Mehmet, to my agents in Smyrna, ordering them to send me what supplies of ammunition they may have on hand by the first train. You, Osman, will take twenty men, and carry this supply straight to the cave on the mountain."

Ali then repaired to the meadow to hold his daily

court ; and at noon the officer was given the letter, and sent back to Mysa. Ali then took Mehmet with fifty men, and visited the cave. The men carried part of the provisions from the magazine with them, and all arrived at the cave before sunset.

It was a strange spot. Only a narrow cleft marked the opening, and this was so hidden by bushes that it would not be readily discovered. On passing through the fissure a large vault was revealed. The floor rose sharply at the rear, where it met the ceiling of the cave. The place was irregular in shape, but would hold perhaps two hundred men. Ali Effendi used it, of course, only as a storehouse, and it was amply large enough for the purpose. Heaps of small sacks of flour, rice, and coffee lay on one side, and these were increased by the loads of the men. A pile of cartridge boxes rose up at the opposite side, and these were also added to.

Ali showed Mehmet where the treasure was hidden, and commanded him to have the rest of the supplies brought up next day.

The men slept that night in front of the cave, and were back in the village before the morning was far advanced. Ali then sent for his nephew, and commanded him to take ten of his companions,

to engage forty mountaineers whom he could trust, and to set out for Besh Parmak. On their way through the plain they should purchase a large supply of flour, olives, cheese and coffee, and take it to the great cave on the mountain. Selim must then send the mountaineers back, and remain there with his men until he was recalled, or until Ali should appear. He should avoid all trouble with peasants, and should attract as little notice as possible. Ali then ordered Mehmet to give Selim one hundred pounds, and to promise the mountaineers a pound each on their return.

The rest of the day was spent in transporting the balance of the ammunition and provisions to the cave. Although Mehmet had but just come back from his previous climb, he had to set out again with the men, and toil up the perpendicular slopes under the broiling sun. He fortunately found a cleft in the hill on the way up, where some snow still lay, and he rubbed it on his flaming face, and took a handful to suck during the rest of the climb.

After depositing the loads, Mehmet ordered five men to remain on guard, and promised that they should be relieved next day. He returned to the village with the others, arriving at Ali's house long after sunset. He found his chief had not forgotten

him, and a large amount of food was smoking in Ali's garden. The men ate ravenously, even forgetting to wash their hands before beginning their meal; and although Mehmet exercised more self-restraint, he perhaps consumed as much food as any of his companions.

Ali came to the garden as Mehmet was finishing his meal, and sat down beside him. His mind had evidently been at work during the day for he at once opened the conversation with—

“I received a letter from my agents in Smyrna to-night, which I got Mustapha to read to me. They inform me of the actual despatch of troops from Salonica, and state their opinion that my life is in danger. They say they have five thousand cartridges in hand, which they will send me on my order, and they have ordered ten thousand more from Malta, which they expect to get within a month.

“I think we have done everything possible to provide for emergencies. With Osman's return to-morrow night, we shall have an ample store of ammunition and provisions. Our band is large and well-equipped. We have also a haven of refuge at Besh Parmak, and on the return of the mountaineers I shall send part of our ammunition to Selim.

" I have been thinking of the possible result of a battalion being sent here. There are few bands now in the vilayet besides my own, and I do not see why such a powerful body of troops should be sent to Smyrna, unless my life is aimed at. And this so recently after the delivery of my pardon ! I confess I am disappointed and embittered by this double-faced dealing, and am at a loss to understand it. Either the pardon did not come from Stamboul, or there has been an entire change of policy since it was issued.

" Then, too, the advisability of remaining here in Samsun Dagħ has engrossed my attention. The range as you know lies between two lines of railway. Troops could be quickly massed on either flank of the mountain, and in a few hours' time could combine at the summit. We could doubtless make a good resistance, and could advance and retreat for a long time ; but we could not carry it on for ever, and our endurance and strength would at last be exhausted.

" Now in Besh Parmak it would be different. There is a vast range of mountains at a considerable distance from any railway. I know the range very well, and am certain that we could elude pursuit, or choose our own fighting ground. I am also con-

sidering a plan which may secure our complete safety ; but I am unwilling to adopt it except as a last alternative, for it is inconsistent with my principles and former life. We will wait until Osman arrives, and discuss the matter more fully with him. It may be the battalion will remain in Smyrna indefinitely, and all our fears are groundless."

At sunset, while Ali and his men were at rifle practice in the meadow, Osman and his men joined them. The faithful lieutenant had accomplished his duty, and the ammunition boxes were now piled with the others in the cave. Their exertions must have been very great ; they had climbed nearly to the top of the mountain in the blazing sun, carrying the heavy cartridge cases in addition to their own equipment, and had then descended to the meadow.

Ali waited until all had refreshed themselves at the brook, and then led the whole band to the end of the meadow. He had purposely called in the outposts, so that the company was complete with the exception of Selim and his ten men, who were at Besh Parmak. He then addressed them in the following words—

" Comrades and brother Moslems. I am informed

that the body of troops which are on their way from Macedonia are Albanians. They are bent on our destruction. I have made every possible preparation for their reception. We have ammunition, provisions and money. In them and in Allah we must trust. The Vali at Smyrna is a noble and God-fearing Moslem ; but he is not liked by the clique at Stamboul on account of his honest and consistent attitude. We have been pardoned by his good offices, but our pardons are now of no avail.

"If you wish to disperse now before these Albanians arrive you are free to do so. Ali, with his faithful treasurer and lieutenant, asks for no unwilling assistance. Let every one who wishes to withdraw do so at once. He will have Ali's word that he may go in peace, with his pay up to the end of the present month."

Ali paused and surveyed the assembly. No one rose.

"I perceive," he continued, "that we are all of one mind, and that our new companions,"—referring to Abdullah's band—"have broken our bread and are true comrades. Now there are two plans for us to choose between. Shall we remain here, and give battle to the bloodthirsty Albanians, whose compatriots sought our destruction in former

days ; or shall we retreat to Besh Parmak, where we can elude their pursuit indefinitely, and pick them off at our leisure ? I have carefully studied the problem during the past two days, and I must point out to you the danger of remaining here. I know your bravery and devotion, but you will not be fighting against Turkish soldiers. If we had only them to fear, I would not give the matter a moment's thought. But these Albanians are not only brave like the Turks, but they are also strong and accustomed to mountain warfare. Suppose they assail us. We retreat to the mountain. Grant that we each kill several men ; even then there will be enough to push us to the topmost peak, and what will meet us there ! Death ! I am convinced that these Albanians will perish to a man in order to avenge the well-merited punishment that I meted out to the shepherd traitors.

“ Look at the other proposition. When we learn that the troops have actually left Mysa, we will leave for Besh Parmak. We will cross the railway early in the morning, and in a few hours will be safe in the plain. We arrive at Besh Parmak, where Selim awaits us with stores of provisions. After a few days the troops may arrive. We kill them off at our leisure, and move from place to

place until they are tired out or are withdrawn. We can then come back to this place and resume our usual life. Which plan do you choose ? ”

The men were silent for a time, and then Mustapha arose and bade the chief do as he thought best. If he wished to remain in Samsun Dagh, they would all fight or die with him ; if he thought best to go to Besh Parmak, they would willingly accompany him. All the men applauded this speech, and fired their rifles in the air shouting, “ Long live Ali, the bold and the true ! ”

Now that a definite course of action had been decided on, there remained nothing to be done but to keep a sharp watch and to be guided by developments. Ali Effendi posted a much larger number of guards than usual, and commanded Mehmet and Osman to hold rifle tournaments each day thereafter. The band now went back to their quarters for the night, and Mehmet lay awake for some time studying the question of the rifle tournaments. He determined to lay out a course in the meadow, and to set up targets two feet square at different distances. He would then induce Ali to offer prizes for the winners, and would keep track of the varying skill of the men, and inform his chief of his observations.

He took the whole band to the meadow next morning, and carefully paced the ground, setting up targets at intervals of one hundred, two hundred, and so on, up to one thousand yards. He erected mounds behind each target, and posted a man there to watch the shots, arranging beforehand that each man should have a definite number.

The men entered into the contest with enthusiasm. They had never practised systematically before, and were overjoyed to find that the sights on their rifles corresponded exactly to the distances given. There were some who could hit the nearer targets almost every time, while they were not at all accurate at the more distant. Mehmet noted these, as well as the men who were proficient only at the extreme ranges. There were a few who were very indifferent shots at any range, and Mehmet determined to advise Ali to dispense with their services, or to employ them only as labourers.

The chief strolled down to the ground at noon, and was surprised at the bright faces of the men. He went at once to where Mehmet was standing, well knowing that Osman could not have been responsible for this new spirit.

Mehmet showed his leader the tables he had prepared, and read him the names of the victors.

He recommended that prizes be awarded these men, and Ali at once assented.

"Give them a pound each," he said, "and state that matches will be held each day with like rewards."

Osman had won the prize for the thousand yards shot and Mustapha for the five hundred. Most of the other victors were young men who had been with Ali for some years, although one was the corporal of Abdullah's band.

Ali Effendi then bade Mehmet read the scores of the entire band, and noted the names carefully.

"Allah be praised," he exclaimed, "that you came to me that night at Bel-Kairé. With this table before me, I shall always know how to place my men hereafter, and unless the few whose names are at the bottom of the list improve at once, I shall take their rifles away from them. What led you to think of this plan, Mehmet?"

"It is a simple matter," answered the treasurer. "The British soldiers in Crete were always firing at targets, and I was struck with their proficiency. I noticed that your men choose any rock or stump to fire at, and never know just where their bullets strike. They have also had no special incentive to practise regularly, and are satisfied with any ordinary

results. I thought that if we had some scheme whereby an exact record could be kept of each man's attainments, it would encourage the skilful men, and spur on the more backward."

Ali commended his officer, and took his own rifle to try his hand at the targets. The sun was almost overhead, and there was no wind blowing. Mehmet sent a soldier to rub each of the targets over with the slaked lime he had prepared, in order to efface all previous marks. When the man had finished with the last target, and had crouched behind the mound, Ali Effendi raised his rifle, and the band gathered around to watch their leader's skill.

He fired slowly at each of the targets in succession. The onlookers could see the bullets strike the first two, but after that the white boards grew so small that they at last seemed to be specks. They saw, however, no tell-tale puffs of dust rise from the ground about, until Ali's last shot at the most distant mark. A puff rose on the bank at the side. He had plainly missed it completely.

All the men now followed their chief to examine the targets more closely. The first was struck at the top ; the second exactly in the centre. A bullet hole was found in each of the others, except in the last, which was blank. The men grunted their

applause at their leader's skill, and Mehmet openly congratulated him. But Ali was not satisfied. He determined to hit the last target if it cost him a thousand cartridges. So he walked back to the firing ground and took careful aim. Another tell-tale puff announced his failure. He then went to the brook, and washed the inside of the rifle barrel. He wiped it carefully with a linen cloth, and fired again with the same result. He now asked Mehmet for a cartridge, as it might bring him luck. This time no dust was raised. They walked the thousand yards, and found the welcome hole in one corner of the white board. Ali was now satisfied, and strode proudly back to the village, giving the pound which Mehmet had handed as his prize to the hodja at the mosque.

Ali Effendi invited Mehmet to dine with him that night at his house. His respect for his treasurer and confidant had greatly increased during the last few days, and when Mehmet appeared at sunset he was cordially greeted by his host.

The two men sat on the floor in the living-room and smoked for a time. The battle-scarred servant came in now and then, and brought fresh coffees, and as they chatted together Mehmet could not help comparing his present visit with several notable

ones he had paid in Christian households. Instead of a luxurious apartment, there was here a room devoid of furniture; only some costly Turkish rugs carpeted the floor. In place of elegantly dressed ladies and fashionably clad gentlemen, there was only a kindly Moslem host—the lady of the house never being visible when men were about. The host too was clad in the same suit which he wore night and day, year in and year out. Moreover, the fez even was not removed; and had either host or guest been called at that moment to descend to the baking plain, or to climb to the snow-covered peak above, they would have made no change in their garments. Instead of whisky and soda there was coffee, and in place of doubtful Havannahs, there was the finest tobacco in the world.

On the whole, Mehmet did not wish himself elsewhere. The words of his host brought him back to his present surroundings.

“What a difference contact with the English makes to a Moslem. Here you are, a young Turk of good intelligence; and yet because you have seen something of the English, and have travelled a little, you can teach me many things. If ever I have a son I shall send him to England to be educated. The English are honest; they are able and brave.

They have always been good friends to Turkey, too ; and, although I know little of history, yet my hodja friend has told me that they have many times warded off the cursed heel of Russia."

Mehmet was naturally gratified at this appreciation of himself and of his father's native land. He spoke to Ali at some length of what he had seen in England, and was interrupted by the entrance of the burly servant, who came to set the meal before them.

A small towel was spread on the floor, and on this was placed a copper dish filled with lamb and rice. The host murmured, "*Bou rourenez*" ;¹ and set the example by taking a morsel of lamb with his fingers and conveying it to his mouth. The servant then brought in a huge loaf of bread which Ali Effendi divided with his hunting knife. There was no talk for some minutes. The servant removed the copper dish, and brought a huge jar of *yaourt*, and threw two wooden spoons on the floor beside it. *Cudihiere* then followed for dessert ; and after the two men had washed their hands, they drank their muddy coffees, and soon afterwards Mehmet took his leave.

Our hero was soon at his accustomed place at the booth ; he always preferred to sleep in the open air.

¹ "*Allons*" or "*Partake*."

Many of his companions were accustomed to pack themselves into narrow compartments, and then to close all the shutters, and stifle their lungs with carbon dioxide ; but Mehmet would not thus tempt Providence. As he lay on his hard and uneven bed he dwelt on the events of the evening. He could not but admire the frank, simple, able nature of Ali.

“ What a pity,” thought he, “ that this capable and noble man has not had an opportunity for development ! As a leader of men he is ideal, brave, quick and resourceful. He inspires confidence and trust ; and yet he is ignorant and circumscribed in his actions. With his latent ability he might reach the highest rank, had he only the opportunity. And is this not true of most of the good Turks ? Compare them with the fellaheen of Egypt, who have been too long under the heel of the oppressor ! Compare them with the ignorant cowards of India ! Their races produce men of thought and of culture, but they are without religion. What an anomaly Turkey affords ! A magnificent race of peasants, absolutely honest, and with wonderful powers of endurance, and yet ground down by the most corrupt Government (except that of orthodox Russia) on earth.

“ Here is a race deeply religious, yet provoked

to the most atrocious massacres, surpassed only by the barbaric hordes of Russia. Look at the plains, fertile as those of Paradise must have been ; and yet affording nourishment to a sparse and needy population ; with vast districts uncultivated, which might nourish the industrious millions of Japan. A country on the threshold of modern Europe, and yet sunk in the corruption and indigence of the Middle Ages !

“ What hope is there for the future ? A century ago and matters were in as bad a condition. The primitive government of Darius is still represented in the vilayets of Turkey. European intervention is problematic, and regeneration from within still more so. Still, right will triumph in the end ; and this great race which once knocked at the gates of Vienna and held the whole Mediterranean in their hands may yet form alliances with a second Francis I, or may combine with England, France and the modern Sardinia to preserve the peace of Europe.”

Mehmet woke early next morning eager to live the day's events. He went to Ali's house, and met him as he was starting for the mosque for prayers. His chief handed him a telegram from his agents in Smyrna, and commanded him to read it. It stated

that an Albanian battalion had just been disembarked at Smyrna, and was to entrain for Mysa and Sardis next morning.

After prayers Ali called in all his band. As they were leaving the village the mountaineers who had returned from Besh Parmak joined them. One of them gave Ali a note from Selim, stating that twelve hundred pounds of flour, four hundred pounds of cheese, and a large quantity of coffee had been purchased, and was now safely stored in the great cave.

Ali ordered Mehmet to give one pound to each of the mountaineers, and to offer them a second pound if they would accompany the band again to Besh Parmak, and carry the loads from the Samsun Dagħ magazine. They were so pleased at the possession of a piece of gold that they all volunteered for further service.

At noon the band, which now numbered one hundred, exclusive of the forty porters, reached the cave-magazine. Ali loaded the mountaineers and sent them on ahead. He then gave his men the ammunition. After they had set off he dug up the treasure, and gave Mehmet most of it to carry. He then commanded his servant to bring his family to the cave, and ordered him so to disguise

the entrance that no one would suspect its existence. He also sent a letter, which he bade Mehmet write to his wife at Mysa, telling her to dig up the treasure in her garden and to confide it to his agents at Smyrna ; and to repair herself to the same city, and wait for future instructions.

Everything now being arranged as the circumstances would best allow, Ali Effendi, accompanied by Osman and Mehmet, who bent under his burden of gold, set out to overtake their companions in the eighty miles march to Besh Parmak.

CHAPTER VI

ENGLISH CAPTIVES

A RAPID march at last brought the different divisions of Ali's host to the edge of the plain. It was about four o'clock in the morning. The men were evidently weary with carrying their heavy loads over the uneven ground, and Mehmet was very glad when the chief ordered a halt for prayers and breakfast. His money-jacket was loaded to its utmost capacity, and the pull on his shoulders was most fatiguing. Ali ordered some of his men to make coffee, and after prayers were finished, all the band had a sip of the invigorating fluid. Each man had provided himself with bread and cheese before starting from the village, and part of this was now consumed.

Mehmet felt greatly refreshed by his meal and rest, and when the march was resumed he walked swiftly in advance, with Ali and Osman. The railway was crossed soon after sunrise. They met

no one until they were well on the other side of the line ; and the few peasants who were then astir were arrested, and compelled to carry some of the loads to the camping-place in the middle of the plain.

The Meander was reached at three in the afternoon, and here a long halt was made among the reeds that grew along the banks of the river. The men ate the balance of their provisions, and rested until sunset. Ali Effendi then called the peasants to where he sat, and commanded Mehmet to give each of them a medjid. He made them swear on the Koran that they would not divulge the secret of their meeting with Ali and his band. The men willingly agreed, and were released. Just as the men were taking up their loads for the final march a horseman dashed into the camp. His steed stood trembling with fatigue, and the Moslem rider threw himself on the ground at Ali's feet.

" Your friend the Ousbashi," he exclaimed, " has sent me to tell you of the morning's events. The troops were sent last night by special trains to Mysa and Sardis. At daybreak they were nearly at the summit of the range and closed in on both sides of the meadow. They were surprised at not meeting with resistance, and sent scouts around the mountains to find out where you were. The commander,

who is a renegade Greek, then seized some of the people of the village and tortured them in order to make them confess your whereabouts. They gave him no information. He then commanded his men to set fire to the village, and while it was burning he led his combined troop to the top of the mountain. When I left they were proceeding along the range in the direction of Kiz Geul."

Ali's teeth crunched as he heard this harrowing tale. He ordered Mehmet to give the man a pound, and then asked him to return to Samsun Dagh, to find out what further evils the pillagers had done, and to come again or send word to Besh Parmak. He sent his thanks and salaams to the Ousbashi; and the man set out on his return, leading his horse by the bridle-rein.

Ali Effendi turned to Mehmet and Osman.

"I now see," he exclaimed, "that these brigand Albanians have declared a vendetta against me. Whoever heard of such prompt action by any Turkish company? I bleed for my loyal friends at Samsun Dagh, who have been ruined and tortured on my account. But I shall make all their sufferings a road to wealth later. What treachery on the part of Farkouh Pasha! What base ingratitude! If ever I am free I shall avenge myself on him at least.

The Government too has been at fault. It has pardoned me and immediately after has let loose the most scoundrelly horde that ever walked on Asian soil. But I have a reserve card which I shall immediately play. May Allah pardon me for my unwilling action, and may He confound these oath-breakers and brigand ruffians ! ”

Mehmet wondered what measure Ali Effendi could have in contemplation, especially as he was ordinarily so frank in proclaiming his plans. He hoped nothing would happen that might be held dishonourable, and was resolved not to become a party to any flagrant crime.

Ali Effendi now took his lieutenant and thirty men, and marched to the south-west, ordering Mehmet to conduct the main body, with Mustapha as guide, directly to the foot of Besh Parmak. Mehmet was forced to obey, though he did not wish to leave his chief.

He walked in front of the great body of men and conversed for a time with Mustapha, who had been born in this plain and knew every path and sheep-trail. After exhausting every topic of conversation that the simple mind of his companion could entertain, Mehmet fell to wondering what plan Ali Effendi could have in mind. He might have set out to

burn some city, or to massacre some sleeping town. He might be going to capture some notable Turks. He shuddered as he realized to what lengths the Moslem conscience could stretch when pressed by circumstances.

It was a wonderful night. There were no trees in the plain, and the starry hosts gleamed above with calm lustre. Mehmet had often studied the star maps in his college days, and could recognize the July constellations with ease. Bootes, with the giant Arcturus, were setting in the west; and hanging beneath was Virgo. At the zenith was Hercules, and Mehmet seemed again to be looking at its wonderful star-cluster through the telescope, and to be calculating the exact point whither the solar system was shooting. The Northern Cross, with Aquila, were well above the eastern horizon, while one side of the great square of Pegasus paralleled the plain.

During the long march, Mehmet noted with rapture the changing scene of earth and sky. Clump after clump of bush was passed. Jackals and badgers went scurrying from side to side. Birds cried fearfully or angrily as they scuttled and fled through the gloom.

The waning crescent of the moon now aided the

kindly light of the stars. The muddy waters of the Meander reflected her figure from time to time as the path neared the endless windings of the stream. Hyenas yelled as their coverts were invaded ; and " the moping owl " complained.

The march continued. Hour after hour and mile after mile the men plodded along. Mehmet saw the constellations rise and set. He had an artistic eye and a cultured ear ; and as he watched the slow calm movement of the moon, the planets and the stars, he could not help contrasting the peace and order of nature with the tumult and passion of mankind.

The stars faded as he finished his reverie. The fair Aurora took her paint-brush and palette, and tinted the horizon. Soon after the day's monarch rose over the edge of the plain. He was inflated to prodigious size, and Mehmet had never seen him so huge and blustering. He involuntarily lowered his eyes and turned for relief in the opposite direction. Besh Parmak stood out in bold outline like some turreted fortress. The name of the range interpreted itself, for five giant fingers protruded from the main mass of the range, as if to give some signal to its distant comrades.

Two hours more and Mehmet met Selim's outposts. A halt was made to wait Ali's coming before climbing

to the cave. Selim's men had a supply of provisions in readiness, and the members of the band ate heartily, while the mountaineers pushed on with their packs.

Mehmet had to wait for over three hours. At last the chief appeared, but one glance at his face prepared Mehmet for unpleasant tidings. Ali had lost his frank and noble look. His fez was pulled well over his forehead, and his expression was sinister and reckless.

The Anglo-American soon saw the cause of the change. Encompassed by the band, there appeared a man whose costume and bearing denoted English birth, and, more startling, by his side walked an English girl !

Mehmet felt the blood rush to his face, and his muscles tingled with indignation. Unable to mask his feelings he walked at once towards Ali, but on the way recovered some of his prudence. His Saxon temperament apprised him that caution and diplomacy were now most greatly needed, and when at last he stood before the brigand leader, he merely welcomed him, and inquired the reason of his delay.

Ali Effendi commanded a short halt. He walked with Mehmet a few steps to where a large rock offered a seat, and narrated the events of the night.

" Fate has again obliged me to act contrary to my wishes. These bloodhounds may be on our track in a day or two. Although I do not fear them especially, yet I am so exasperated against the Government, that I have determined to cause it some annoyance, and to compel it to recall the troops. Had the Government respected the pardon which it gave me voluntarily, I would have given my life to have ensured the safety and comfort of any European family, especially any of the English whom I reverence and love.

" Look over your shoulder, and you will see an Englishman, and his daughter, whom I did not wish to take but who refused to leave her father. You will immediately write a telegram, which I shall have Selim take to Sokia, and send over the railway telegraph line. Address it to the British Consul at Smyrna, and state that if the troops are sent to Besh Parmak I shall execute this hostage. I would send it to the Vali Pasha whom I trust, but I realize that he is now powerless, and do not want him snubbed again. Do you know any English, Mehmet ? "

" I can speak it a little," answered he, " for I picked up a few words in Crete, and used them to good advantage when I was in England."

Ali was much relieved when he heard this, and commanded his treasurer to assure the captives that they would be treated with every courtesy. "Inform them," he said, "that no ransom is to be exacted from them, and that my only wish is to learn from them of the outside world. Tell them also that they will doubtless be released in a few days."

Mehmet left his chief, who immediately began to give orders for the ascent of the mountain and for the stationing of outposts. He walked to where the Englishman and his daughter were sitting, and translated Ali's communication in as vile English as he could improvise on the spot.

At the first words the captives started, for the accent at least was faultless; moreover, Mehmet's features and tone betrayed sympathy and devotion. The father soon relapsed into his former silent and passive attitude, and the girl's attention was employed in cheering her parent.

"Let us hope," said she, "that this man's words are true, and that this violent chief does not mean us any real harm. It is at least a good augury that we have not yet been robbed, and that some deference is paid us."

But the man, who was evidently an archaeologist, was peevish and implacable.

"I have travelled," he grumbled, "in Egypt, in Syria and even in Central Asia, and have never met with the slightest mishap; and yet here in Asia Minor I am forcibly detained from my researches, and carried off to some robber's den. These men may be cannibals for all that I know, and may feast on my body before another day is passed. And to be kidnapped, too, when I was so near to Priene, that famous city, with its wonderful ruins as perfectly excavated as those of Pompeii. Priene as you know was formerly a seaport, though now it is an inland city. How I would have enjoyed noting the deposits of the Meander, which, like the Cayster at Ephesus, has filled up the sea! And then Miletus!!

"But, my dear,"—recalling himself—"to think of you too, who until now have cared in comfort for your old father, and are now a captive with him in a strange and desert land! Here no villages or hamlets are to be seen, and around us are barbarians who know no classical or Christian tongue."

"But you exaggerate, father," responded the girl; "there is here a young man who knows some English, and we can explain to the chief who we are, and he will surely not detain us. He has himself said that he wants no ransom. What then can

he wish, unless it be to see some Europeans, whom he may regard as the Aztecs regarded Cortez ? ”

The band was now stringing up the mountain, and Ali Effendi approached the captives, and ordered Mehmet to bid them follow. Mehmet had been racking his brain to provide for their comfort, during the conversation between father and daughter, for he knew that they were very tired, and that the long climb would fatigue them utterly. He had summoned Mustapha, and bidden him scour the country and bring back donkeys, horses, camels or even buffaloes. He now turned to his chief and said—

“ I have informed these people of your kindly intentions. They tell me that they are very tired, and cannot walk a step further. I have therefore sent Mustapha, who knows the country well, to bring some animals ; and when he returns we will have our guests mount them, and can soon overtake our companions.”

Ali Effendi murmured “ *Peche* ” ; ¹ and they waited about half an hour. Mehmet explained to the tired prisoners that they were to be provided with mounts, and the girl guessed from the chief’s attitude that it was the young interpreter who was responsible

¹ “ All right.”

his utmost to protect and possibly save these innocent strangers.

The English girl, Harold noted at a glance, was about twenty years of age. Her figure was slight, yet her carriage showed the benefit of English outdoor life ; she was supple, graceful and strong. Her features were not classic ; but there was an expression of fearlessness and self-possession that atoned for any irregularity. Her solicitude for her father also denoted an unselfish and resourceful nature ; and, as he contemplated these charms, Harold was moved to admiration such as he had never before felt in the presence of woman. He sought for words in which he might reassure this unfortunate creature, and at last resolved on a bold course.

He advanced to where she was still standing.

" I do not think," he said in the purest English " that there is any immediate cause for alarm."

The girl started at the words.

" Do not, I beg of you," he continued, " show any astonishment at what you may hear. Believe that I am not a party to your capture. Though I *may* be a Moslem like the rest of this party, yet I have received sufficient kindness at the hands of Englishmen in Crete and in Egypt to make me willing to

give my life in defence of any of their race. You have, I am sure, sufficient perspicuity to realize that my words are sincere. Rest assured that all my intelligence, and all my strength and courage shall be devoted to rescue you from present inconvenience and possible danger."

The girl seemed comforted at these words and regarded Harold's countenance closely. She then replied—

"Whoever you may be, and whatever you are, I adjure you, as a man, to induce your chief to permit us to return to Sokia to resume our journey. My father is not strong, and I fear for his health if he is obliged to continue long in this mountain life, with its exposure and privations. He has always had every care, because his devotion to learning has made him negligent of even the simplest rules of hygiene. For myself I ask nothing, though I fear this brutal horde."

Mehmet was about to reply with comforting words when Ali approached, and commanded a resumption of the march.

The savant put his notebook in his pocket, and mounted his donkey. Mehmet assisted the English girl to her seat in the pack-saddle and, as the path was now less steep, he walked by her side. She

had evidently been struck by the incongruity of his presence, for she asked—

“How do you, a youth with English features and with a perfect accent, happen to be in this barbarous band?”

Mehmet thought a moment, for he naturally wished to declare himself as he was. He looked at the girl, and comprehended her frank and loyal nature, but he realized how improbable his story would seem, and he resolved only to suggest the truth, leaving the rest to future events.

“I have been a member of this band for only two weeks,” he at last responded; “before that time I lived in Smyrna and in Crete. I have also travelled extensively, and have spent much time in England and America; for I lost both of my parents when a child, and have since travelled in search of change and adventure. In fact, I suppose I am something of a knight-errant. When stopping in Smyrna I heard of Ali and resolved to become a member of his band, as it was said that he was about to be pardoned, and I hoped to learn of his strange life and of conditions in this country. I was accepted as a promising recruit, and have since been given a responsible position. I had hoped to have left Ali Effendi in a few weeks, and to have gone to

Abyssinia ; but five days ago his pardon was revoked, and since then he has been a fugitive. Although I find much to admire in him, yet there is much that I disapprove of, and since the annulment of his pardon I have been awaiting an honourable opportunity for escape. This day's developments, however, have quite changed my plans, and I shall remain with Ali until I see his guests restored to safety."

The English girl listened with surprise to this story. Her contracted brows showed she was trying to explain the situation. She glanced at Mehmet, and noted the profile of his face, and was reassured by the regular outline, the high forehead, the prominent nose, the mild lips, and the square chin. With a woman's intuition she at last murmured—

"Perhaps Heaven has bestowed you upon us at this juncture for securing our safety and deliverance. If you can obtain our freedom, you may be sure of our deepest gratitude. And yet what can you do without uselessly imperilling your life? Your leader seems to be a man of reckless courage and of unscrupulous policy."

"Have patience for a few days," cried Mehmet, "and I am sure some change will present itself

which will enable me to obtain means for escape. Keep up your strength and that of your father, and be certain that, for the present at least, you will have every courtesy shown you."

Just before sunset the troop arrived at the open space in front of the great cave. Its altitude was four thousand feet. Here an absolutely level ledge disclosed itself, and, strange to behold, a carpet of turf some six hundred square feet in surface afforded a luxurious camp. A small brook gurgled down the decline at the left, ensuring an ample supply of pure water. At the rear was a precipice of trachytic rock, pierced by a narrow and low opening which afforded entrance to a huge cave. The ledge sloped away abruptly in front, and the tops of a few high pines growing at the sides of the brook rose almost even with the level space.

Below a magnificent panorama was outspread. At the extreme right the long range of Samsun Dagħ was faintly revealed with a pall of smoke hanging over its central peak. At the extreme left was the sea with the island of Samos showing on the sky-line. All the intervening space was filled up with the Meander plain—a vast expanse of meadow and marsh, with the silver line of the river winding like a great serpent from end to end. In

the distance was Sokia, its tall minarets standing out in white contrast to the black mountain-side. The cliff above Priene was clearly outlined against the setting sun, and Mehmet borrowed Ali's field-glasses for the benefit of the archaeologist.

Ali Effendi presently took the glasses, and carefully examined the plain. He could see a goods train loaded with licorice, wending its way from Sokia towards Smyrna. He could see the cloth tents of peasants dotting the plain, but he could see nothing of special trains bearing troops from Smyrna, or of bodies of men marching from Aidin. He seemed relieved after his scrutiny, and to have recovered something of his former buoyancy, for he went to the brook and washed his hands and feet. Mehmet and the others followed his example ; and while the English captives looked on in respectful curiosity, Ali Effendi led his band in prayers.

The evening meal was now prepared. The outlaws, like Sherman's soldiers on their march from Atlanta to the sea, had garnered in any sheep, fowls, or game they had met with on the march. An ample supply of these was now roasted, and from the magazine came a supply of coffee and condiments.

Mehmet now asked Ali Effendi where the English visitors were to sleep that night.

"They shall have the great cave to themselves," he replied; "to-morrow you will set to work, and have a hut built for them; while they are in my care I wish that they shall have every possible comfort."

Mehmet conveyed the host's good wishes to his prisoners, and the lady seemed relieved at the outlook.

Mehmet placed some bales for them to sit upon at the border of the ledge, and hollowed out a great loaf of bread. He filled this with lamb, chicken and quail, and carried it to the girl. He then performed like office for her father. The strangers ate heartily of their repast, doubtless thinking that men who had washed and prayed could not be especially contaminating in their touch.

The girl seemed to have remembered Mehmet's advice, for she even ate her plate, the crust. She then expressed herself as quite refreshed and satisfied. The treasurer now escorted her to the cave. He ordered Mustapha to follow, and between them they piled the cartridge boxes and sacks nearly to the roof. This formed a secure boudoir for the lady, and Mehmet arranged blankets, bales and boxes so that a bed was soon made.

On returning to the ledge Mehmet found the

savant drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes with Ali Effendi. The chief beckoned his officer to sit by them, and told him to ask the stranger his name and occupation.

"My name," replied the latter, "is William Lovejoy; I am the Professor of Greek at the University of Reading in England. I have undertaken this journey partly for my health, although I do not think that anything is the matter with me, and principally to study the route of Alexander the Great. I have been employed for some years in writing the life of this hero, but I might never have ventured on this particular expedition had not my daughter, Edith, insisted on my taking a vacation."

Mehmet translated this to Ali, and the chief then bade him ask the Professor about the countries he had visited on the way.

The scholar continued—

"We came from Reading to Paris, where I spent but little time; we were soon in Athens, where the magnificent museum delighted me for some days. We then hurried to Macedonia. There I visited the birthplace of Alexander, and spent some time in recalling each incident of his youth. I visited the battlefield of Cheronea, where his father, Philip, won his independence. I went to Thebes,

and tried to locate the house of Pindar, which was the only abode standing after Alexander's ruthless vengeance. I then followed the general's route to the river Granicus, to Troy, to Sardis, to Ephesus whose magnificent temple was destroyed on the day of my hero's birth. I was proceeding to Priene when my journey was so startlingly interrupted by your advent. I had intended to continue my researches to Miletus, where Alexander met with such prolonged resistance; to Halicarnassus, the birthplace of the father of history; to the Issus, where the Greek general's greatest battle was fought; to Tyre; to Egypt; in short, to have visited each stopping place of my hero, all of which I have explored in imagination, and many of them in person."

"This Alexander must have been a great man," observed Ali Effendi, "since you have come so far to see the places made famous by his battles or footsteps. You must tell me more about him. When did he live? Was he a good marksman?"

Before Mehmet could translate the story and the question, Edith came from the cave with a blanket, which she wrapped about her father, begging him to be careful and not take cold. She then retired to rest and the professor resumed his talk. He had

evidently quite forgotten his environment, and may have fancied himself back in his class-room at Reading.

"Alexander was a great man," he continued, "perhaps the greatest in history. He had genius of the highest order, and this was developed by his teacher, Aristotle, who was infinitely wiser than Solomon. His genius, too, was many-sided, for he was a great general, a great organizer, a great politician, and a great builder. Egypt's metropolis immortalized his name. His campaigns are studied in every military class-room.

"You ask me when he lived? More than two thousand years ago. Was he a good marksman? No, at least not in the modern sense of the word, for rifles had to sleep in the minds of inventors many centuries before they saw the light of day. Yes, in another sense, for he shot his phalanxes with perfect aim at the centre of the Persian targets, where Darius or his generals lay, and the prize of victory was then his. The unwieldy hordes immediately vanished into oblivion, and Alexander stalked forth to encounter new worlds."

Edith's voice was now heard calling her father to rest, and the professor rose reluctantly and entered the narrow cleft.

This was the first moment during the day that Mehmet had been alone with Ali Effendi, and he improved the opportunity by asking him to relate the occurrences of the past night.

Ali informed him that after he had left the camping place in the plain he had directed his march towards Sokia. He had intended to seize the manager of the English licorice factory there, although he knew him to be well armed and well guarded. A peasant, however, had told him that an Englishman had come to the city by the noon train, and was going on to Priene next morning before daylight.

"I therefore determined," continued Ali, "to seize the man, as I preferred taking a complete stranger, and to avoid useless bloodshed. We were posted on the road between Sokia and Priene in the early morning. The Englishman appeared. We carried him off before he knew what had happened. Unfortunately his daughter was with him, and refused to leave him notwithstanding all our signs. I am sorry she is here, but since it is so we must show them both every kindness."

Ali then asked Mehmet the exact words he had used in his telegram to the British Consul. The scribe at once replied—

"Although I was much hurried at the moment I well remember the words—

" 'I have an Englishman in my hands. If the troops now operating at Samsun Dagħ are sent to Besh Parmak I shall execute him.—ALI EFFENDI.' "

Mehmet remembered the line which he had added on the spur of the moment—

"Delay departure of troops a few days.—A FRIEND."

He was glad now that some good angel had prompted him to make this postscript, for though he had thought nothing of it at the time, he now realized that it might mean salvation.

Ali then commanded Mehmet to sleep at the entrance of the cave, which he was only too glad to do. He longed for quiet to arrange his thoughts, and he believed that his proximity to the English people would inspire him with plans for their deliverance.

CHAPTER VII

HAROLD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO EDITH

HAROLD slept but little that night. He sat down on a box with his back to the entrance of the cave, and looked out upon the ledge.

The fire had died out, and only some glowing embers lighted up the faces of his former companions, who were now in truth his foes. Ali, the brigand leader, sat opposite, with his back to the plain. His fez was set high on his head, covering his brow and his eyes were fixed on the changing flicker of the ruddy coals, in which he seemed to read the varied fortunes he had experienced. Harold regarded with interest the working of his features. Sadness was imprinted on them at first—sorrow at his fate perhaps. Anger followed as he recalled the death of his father. Then a smile lighted up his face as he remembered the vengeance he had visited on his father's murderer. Ali pushed back his fez and

lighted a cigarette at a coal as he recalled his triumphs in the mountains. He murmured an expression of disgust and spat into the fire as his transactions with Farkouh Pasha crossed his mind. Then the recollection of the pardon cheered him, and he rose up and took deep draughts of the cool night air. He seemed to remember his new friend Mehmet, for he cast a glance in his direction ; and the faithfulness of Osman, for he looked where he was sleeping ; also the constancy of his men, for his eye roamed around the narrow ledge where some fifty Moslems were stretched, either wrapped in dreams of Paradise or tortured with remorse for past crimes.

The treachery of the Government now evidently came into Ali's mind, as he sat down again by the fire, and looked into its dying flames. He threw in some twigs and dry leaves, and looked for their blaze to revive his spirits, but this act only seemed to bring him deeper despair, and to suggest the burning of Samsun Dag. He cast a glance in that direction, and could see a dull glow on the horizon, where perhaps the pine forest was burning.

Ali gave a nervous start and grasped his rifle, but he soon remembered his position and laid it down again. He then pulled his fez over his forehead, and bent over the fire so that Harold could

hardly see his face. The thoughts that were now passing through his mind he seemed desirous of hiding from God and man. He kept this position so long that Harold's eyes grew weary with watching, so he raised them and regarded the distant plain.

The moon had not yet risen, and plain, mountain, and sea were wrapped in slumber except for the glow on Samsun Dag.

Harold now thought of his past relations with Ali ; of how delighted he had been at his reception into the band ; of his rapture at the simple life in the mountains ; of his pleasure at being appointed treasurer. But he reproached himself a little for his passive attitude at the execution of the Persian, although perhaps it was merited, and for his inaction when the Moslems and Armenian were robbed. The capture of the English people had broken all ties, however ; and as he looked at Ali across the embers, Harold realized that this man was henceforth only an enemy, whom he might use any means to circumvent.

His thoughts then turned to the English professor and the unselfish Edith : the father so brutally interrupted in the pursuit of his life's passion ; the daughter drawn to the same fate in her pro-

tecting watch over her parent. He thought with half-shut eyes of the impression she had made upon him ; she had seemed so strong, so tender, so courageous.

" Oh," he whispered to himself, " if I could only meet her under different circumstances, how bold and how patient I would be to win her love ! She is my ideal of a woman, capable, loving, devoted, and endowed with a beauty, too, which cannot be analysed, but which speaks in every gesture and pose. And yet how may I hope ? We are all prisoners. Her father is frail with all his strength of mind. I am alone and can hardly escape myself. She is strong ; but can a woman's strength compass the many leagues of march through mountain and marsh ? How tantalizingly Sokia and the sea, and Samos presented themselves to us this evening ! "

Harold contracted his brows ; the wall of difficulties which rose before him only sharpened his determination and courage.

" Shall I," thought he, " permit myself and my friends to be kept in bondage and danger by an ignorant band of outlaws, and that with a secure refuge in sight ! To try and escape by night may be foolhardy, as the outposts stretch to the plain itself. It might be possible by day. If they could

once reach the plain, they might hide among the reeds on the Meander. Possibly in my capacity as treasurer and confidant of Ali I could impose on the outposts. But how much can my friends endure? A two hours' run is necessary before the plain can be reached, and then another two hours' walk will be required to reach the river. If I only had an assistant to help me and a guide who knew the way perfectly, I could send my friends on, and with my comrade could stop pursuit until they were in safety."

Harold now mentally reviewed the principal men in the band. Osman was devoted to Ali, Selim was his nephew. Mustapha!—Harold stopped and thought a long time about this ignorant but manly fellow. Harold well remembered his gratitude when he had relieved him of his duties as treasurer. He was a simple man, and if the Anglo-American had gained the confidence of Ali so easily, he ought at least to be able to win that of the humbler brigand. Suppose he agreed to help Harold in the plan. Mustapha was a native of Aidin, and must know the plain thoroughly; he was also doubtless acquainted with many peasants who would aid them. With Mustapha as a guide Harold felt that he would

be able to defy Ali. He had been in the plain himself when a youth, and had hunted the whole length of the Meander, and now he felt that if he could once reach the river with his friends he would be comparatively safe.

Harold here felt a strong desire to acquaint Edith with his plans ; but he hoped she was now resting and recuperating her strength. He determined to disclose his identity to her that day, and to inform her of his plans.

He lit a match and looked at his watch. It was three o'clock. The moon had risen, and the promontory of Mycale was lit up by her subdued gleam. Harold surveyed his companions. All were sunk in sleep, save Ali who still sat with his face turned to the ashes of the previous evening's fire. His eyes then travelled over the ledge and scanned the plain. Only a sea of vapour was visible, and Harold noted the danger which Edith and her father would run if they had to spend any considerable time there. He mentally recorded the necessity of providing brandy or coffee and quinine, and resolved to include these in the list of necessaries to be provided next day.

Having arranged his thoughts, and feeling that nothing could be done before sunrise, Harold now

changed his position, and closed his eyes in sleep. He had marched throughout the two previous nights, and would have been very tired had not the excitement of the day given him new strength.

Two hours passed by. Harold had arisen, and was stretching his stiffened limbs. His first thought was for Edith, and he wondered how she had passed the night. The day had dawned, and Ali and his men were preparing for prayers. Harold took his place among them, and when the devotions were finished he asked his chief how he had rested.

"I did not sleep at all," answered the outlaw, "my mind was occupied with the problem of my captives. I thought also of the fate of my friends at Samsun Dag, and wondered what further atrocities the Albanian fiends would commit at Kiz Geul. The safety of my two families also kept me in suspense, and I am anxiously awaiting further news from the mountain."

Ali examined the plain with his field-glasses. "All is well at present," he observed, "and if it were not for these English people I would have little anxiety. I confess that I am somewhat undecided about them. The English have been my friends, and some of them have done me kindnesses. On the other hand the British Ambassador is responsible

for the despatch of the troops to Samsun Dagħ. This English hodja is an enthusiast, who has braved privation and danger to write the life of a Greek, who died two thousand years ago. His daughter has left comfort to care for him. And yet if I release them I may be sure that the troops will be scaling this mountain the morning after. I have only one hundred men. It is true that we are skilful, and know the country ; but an attack would mean death to many and endless flight and privation to the rest. Our best friend is delay. If we can live along for a few months there is sure to be a change, and then a bright future will await us."

Harold expressed sympathy with Ali's tortured state of mind, and then added—

" I should be sorry to have anything happen to the English people. Your telegram to the Consul ought to have instant effect, and he will probably do his utmost to prevent the troops from being sent here. He knows that you will do everything possible to provide comfort for the prisoners as long as you are not menaced."

" Yes, I shall certainly do that," replied Ali. " If they want anything, Mehmet, send a peasant to Sokia for it, no matter what it costs."

Harold at once ordered some men to go to the plain, and bring up a peasant. He then prepared some coffee, eggs, and toast for his friends, and resumed his seat at the entrance to the cave.

Edith came out at sunrise, and gave a smile of gratitude to her door-keeper, for she at once concluded that he had kept his position throughout the night. She called to her father, and Harold prepared seats for them, and served the scanty breakfast. While they were eating Harold asked the girl how she had passed the night.

"I really rested very well," she answered graciously. "The bed you had prepared was very comfortable, and I was dreadfully tired. I am rather sorry that I awoke, for now I realize most of the troubles of yesterday. Please go at once to your chief, and beg that we may be permitted to depart. We have no extra clothing, no proper food and no remedies in case of illness. My father is subject to bronchitis, and is sure to have an attack if we remain here."

Harold answered that he would speak to Ali, but that he had little hope of his granting their request. He told them that he had orders to get anything they wanted, and asked them to make out a list at once.

Ali shrugged his shoulder when Harold conveyed Edith's request to him. He refused to let his captives go, and said the old hodja could not possibly derive any harm from a few weeks' sojourn in the mountains in summer. He himself had lived in the open air all his life both summer and winter, and the Englishman would be much better off there than in the plain, where fever was everywhere. If the man had not already taken cold there was no danger that he would, and he ought to be glad of a few weeks of mountain life. Ali further told Harold to take the captives to walk every day, and to allow them every reasonable liberty.

Harold told Edith and her father of Ali's answer ; and added that he would at once see that they had a proper habitation for the night. He also told her that he had important news for her, and would convey it at a later period of the day.

The day's work now commenced. The outposts came pouring in and nearly covered the ledge. Ali Effendi had sent others at daybreak as substitutes, and so there were the same number of men at the camping ground. Harold next sent about twenty men to cut poles and pine boughs on the slope above. He then looked the ground over carefully, and chose a place for the captives' hut. Two large

pinces stretched their branches over a comparatively level spot, and he resolved to use these for two of the four uprights. He returned to the ledge and explored the cave for tools, but he found only an old mattock and some rope.

The men now began to return with their loads, and the thoughtful Mehmet prepared a booth near the brook, at the front of the ledge, where his friends could sit and enjoy the scene below. As he was proceeding to the site of the hut a guard came in bringing an intelligent-looking peasant. Harold led him at once to the little booth, and made out the list of comforts which the man was to procure at Sokia. It was decided to order blankets, mattresses, coarse garments, tinned provisions, dishes, cordials and quinine. Harold added to the list canvas, tools and some boards. He then gave the man twenty pounds, and promised him five pounds for himself if he would return next morning. The peasant set out at once, and ran down the mountain slope. Ali Effendi took his men on a tour through the mountain, and Harold and Mustapha set out to build the hut.

The site of the new abode was one hundred yards higher up the slope and about three hundred yards to the right of the cave. The ground was soon

cleared of stones and two deep holes were dug, and some of the poles were planted in them. Upon these four supports—for the two pines had saved much labour—Harold crossed and recrossed a multitude of the poles which the men had cut. An enormous heap of pine boughs was now at hand for the roof. Mustapha climbed each of the trees in succession, and Harold handed him the boughs which he laid in order on the roof. But the sides were yet open. Fortunately there remained a large quantity of both poles and boughs, and these Harold worked in at the four walls, tying the poles at the top and interlacing the pine branches. The hut was now complete, but there was no mode of entrance or egress. Harold tied up some of the boughs at the back, and resolved to make windows and a door as soon as his boards and tools arrived. He ordered Mustapha to collect a quantity of pine needles, and when these were fetched he carpeted the floor with them.

The work was now finished for the moment, and Harold went to the booth, and invited Edith and her father to visit their new abode. Edith was charmed with the situation, and eagerly sniffed the fragrance of the pine needles.

"I thank you very much," she said, "for your

kindness and despatch, for although rude the shelter and privacy is very welcome."

Harold assured her that his work was not yet finished ; he proposed to cover the pine needles with canvas, and to screen the room into two compartments. He also told her that he had ordered boards and tools from Sokia, and that he thought of making two windows and a door when they arrived. A table and two benches were also in anticipation if the boards proved sufficiently long or numerous.

Edith was struck with her new knight's energy and skill and asked him where he had acquired such proficiency.

" Oh," answered Harold, " I have knocked around the world so much that I can turn my hand to almost anything. You shall have an ample supply of food served you four times a day ; and I hope that by to-morrow morning you will have everything possible which can contribute to your comfort. I shall be within call at all times, for I have charge of the cave, and if you wish for anything, or desire to talk with me, you have only to say ' Mehmet.' "

Ali Effendi returned at noon to the camp, and Harold reported the progress that had been made towards making the captives at home.

" The strangers seem to be much pleased with their

dwelling, and I hope that by morning they will be quite comfortable."

"Very good," answered Ali, "we have done all that we can for them. Selim ought to be back by now, and our messenger from Samsun Dagħ should return soon."

He looked at the plain through his field-glasses. The usual train from Smyrna was approaching, and there was no undue length in the line of carriages that wound over the railway.

While he was thus engaged the courier from Samsun Dagħ came up. He had evidently changed his horse in the plain, as the animal was comparatively fresh, while the rider was completely fagged. Ali bade him wash at the brook, and commanded some of his men to prepare strong coffees. After the messenger had rested a little he drank the coffees one after the other, and then sat cross-legged and rolled a cigarette.

"I returned to Samsun Dagħ the morning after leaving you," he whispered. "I found the village a smouldering mass. The forest of pines was on fire, and people were wandering here and there, with children and infants in their arms. The Ousbashi was gone. I went to Kiz Geul and found that place was also on fire, and the noble grove of

cypresses at the side of the lake flaming like great candles. The soldiers had left the place, and were following the range towards Beindeer. I met some of your old hodja friends, and told them that you were in safety. They were pleased, because they look on you as the good genius of their country, and patiently await your return. I went back to Samsun Dagħ. I met your servant on the mountain, and he told me your first family were in safety."

The man spoke in an audible tone now, for the numberless coffees he had drunk proved the strongest kind of stimulant.

"I then procured a horse with the money you had given me," he continued, "and rode at full speed down the mountain to the plain. There my animal foundered, and I borrowed another horse from a peasant, saying I was in your service. He gladly gave it to me, and sent you his best wishes."

Ali Effendi embraced the Turkish soldier, and ordered Mehmet to give him two pounds. He then called one of his men, who was one of his first companions, and bade him set out for Samsun Dagħ and Kiz Geul, and to distribute alms to the needy. He went himself to the cave and brought back a heavy bag of gold.

"Take this," said he to his comrade, "and give

it as the first contribution on my part to my destitute people. Assure them that if I live I shall rebuild their houses, and shall make their lot far happier than before. If there are any men you know to be able, and good shots, enlist them at once and bring them here. I have rifles for fifty, and ammunition for several hundred."

The man mounted the horse, and set out on his long journey. Ali Effendi went to the border of the ledge, and sat gazing in the direction of Samsun Dagħ, over which a pillar of cloud still hung. Harold was saddened at the description of this modern Grand Pré.

Ali sought his confidant after a few moments, and spoke to him as follows—

"You now see, Mehmet, with what people we have to deal. These Albanians are as bad as the Cossacks, who delight in pillage and massacre. I would gladly perish in their destruction had I not two families dependent upon me. My second wife, who I trust is now in Smyrna, may to-day be delivered of a son. I have my brother to educate, and two daughters to dower. I halt between two opinions: whether to march to Samsun Dagħ and slay several hundred of these wolves; or to stay here, and preserve my life for my kindred and

country. Allah has doubtless guided me. I am safe. I can easily remunerate my friends for any damage they have suffered ; and if ever a kinder Government replaces the present, I will show the Moslem world what a true Turk can do."

Ali now doubled his outposts, and sallied forth again to inspect his surroundings. Mustapha and a few men were left on the ledge, and Harold determined to sound the former treasurer at once. He walked to where the man was sitting, and reclined by him. He then offered him his tobacco-box, and while they were rolling the thread-like amber, he asked him if he knew the district below him.

"Oh, yes !" replied Mustapha. "I was born at the northern edge of the plain, and in my youth I worked all over this expanse, digging licorice root. I used to know nearly all the peasants and, if you should go with me, I could take you to every hamlet and village, where I still have friends. I do not know this mountain very well, but once in the plain I am quite at home."

This answer led the way to a long talk between the two.

"What do you think of the strangers ?" asked Harold.

"They seem to be very grand people," answered

Mustapha. "I have seen some English people at Aidin and Nazli, where there are licorice factories. I like the English, for they are very generous and honourable, although they sometimes knock people about a bit."

"What a pity," observed Harold, "that our chief has made prisoners of these innocent people. I am sure that only evil can come of it, and when the English Government learns of their capture they will surely send a fleet to Smyrna. It may even send its own sailors here to kill us all off. I wish I could save Ali and these people, for it will be our chief's safety in the end to release his captives. Without them he can move from place to place, while with them you and I and he will be in greatest danger. I have told him as much, but he will not admit that he has made a mistake.

"Now, Mustapha, these people must be rich, for all English and Americans are. What do you say if we help them to escape? We shall be doing Ali and our band the greatest possible service, and the captives will give us a large sum. I can arrange so that Ali will never be able to harm us, and we shall have something stored up for our old age without having done anything but good, and so atone for any past misdeeds."

Mustapha could not follow the whole train of Harold's reasoning, but he had a warm feeling towards the clever young Cretan who had relieved him of his onerous duties. He liked him personally, too, and after some pondering he replied—

“I have every confidence in you, Mehmet, for I know that you are able, and you have a true, honest face. If you think it best to carry out this plan do so, and I will help you. But be careful, for if Ali hears of it he will shoot us both on the spot.”

Harold replied that he would take every precaution, and would wait many days if necessary rather than run any unnecessary risk. He then walked back and forth on the ledge, congratulating himself on his first victory, and studying further plans. He decided that it would be useless to do anything before the peasant returned from Sokia, as he would need some assistance in the plain, and he was much taken with the appearance of the man.

As he was pondering over the scheme a bright thought struck him. Might he not tell the peasant that Ali Effendi repented having made the English people captives, as they might become seriously ill or die in his hands? Might he not further say that Ali would be glad to have them restored to safety if it could be done secretly and without his

knowledge? Harold's position as treasurer and confidant would give support to such a tale, and the peasant would be equally desirous of keeping the secret. The man could then return at once to the plain, and could make all arrangements for flight; he could go and come without exciting suspicion, since he was known to be in Ali's employ.

Harold felt much relieved at having marked out some definite plan. He glanced in the direction of the hut, and saw Edith and her father approaching.

"May we go for a walk?" they asked.

Harold answered in the affirmative, and told Mustapha to keep guard at the cave, and to inform Ali on his return that they had gone for a short walk.

The pseudo Moslem resolved to remain no longer in a false position; so when they had gone some distance and the professor had reached a point where he could see Priene and Miletus, Harold asked Edith to be seated.

"In order to prepare you, Miss Lovejoy, for a plan of escape," he began, "I must first tell you who I am; for I have already hinted to you how I entered this band of outlaws.

"I am an Englishman or an American, I hardly know which, for my parents passed their early

life on either side of the Atlantic. I was born in Smyrna, and lived there as a boy. My parents are both dead, and although I have a comfortable fortune, I have engaged in business since my return from the west. You know how I happen to be here : tired of the humdrum life in Smyrna, I ventured on this unusual escapade. I am glad of it now, and intend to do my utmost to effect your deliverance. I have already enlisted the services of one of the best men in the band, and hope on the arrival of the peasant who is bringing your goods to engage him, and to perfect plans for an immediate flight."

Edith listened with lips apart to this strange tale. She did not doubt a word of it, the true ring in Harold's voice commanded belief. Tears of relief and gratitude started to her eyes, and she at once responded—

"I gladly accept your service. Surely Fortune has been kind, as well as cruel, since after leading us into a pit she has put forth a hand to deliver us ; and I am sure that you will find the means, for I put great reliance on your ability and courage. Let us go at once to my father that he may share in my joy."

"Father," she cried, running to where he sat, "God has raised us up a friend and protector in a

mysterious way. This young man is of our race, and by a strange leading has been brought with us to this place. He is in the confidence of the chief, and hopes to effect our escape."

The professor shook Harold's hand heartily, and asked him his name.

"Harold Elpinstone. I received part of my education in England, and have often heard your name quoted in connection with philological and historical research. I am very glad that Fate has led me where I may be of use to you and your daughter."

The three then sat on a bank of bracken, and Harold exhorted his companions to care for their health, and to be ready to go with him at any time. He urged them to be patient, however, as he might be forced to wait some days before he could work out his project. He reminded them that it would be rash to set out until something had been arranged for their reception in the plain, because if they were recaptured, they might never get another chance of flight, as he and his comrade would undoubtedly be put to death.

"You must run no needless risk," said Edith; "we should be most grieved if anything befell you. You are in no danger here in your present position,

and we would rather remain captives than cause your death."

"I shall take every precaution," answered Harold, "but I shall not shrink from danger if I can deliver you from this unscrupulous man. As for myself, I have voluntarily placed my head in the lion's mouth, while you have been brought here against your will."

As it was after noon the party returned to the hut. Ali was back again on the ledge, and glanced in their direction. He seemed pleased at the bright appearance of his captives, and remarked to Harold that they looked stronger already. He added that a few weeks in the mountain air would make them as enduring as his own brigands. Harold expressed his pleasure at their apparent cheerfulness and health, and then turned to provide a lunch for his guests.

A flock of sheep had been driven up from the plain, and Harold ordered that the ewes should be milked into some earthenware jars which had contained *yaourt*. He then selected two of the tenderest of the chickens, and told a man to kill and pluck them. Some fine coals were glowing in the middle of the ledge, and Harold split the chickens and broiled them over the coals. It needed but a few minutes

to cook the chickens thoroughly; and he then toasted some bread, and placed the meat upon the two great pieces. There were no dishes to serve the food on, so Harold ripped the white cover off one of the cartridge boxes, and advanced with his wooden platter to the hut. A man had followed with the jars of sheeps' milk, and the food was placed before the prisoners. They ate heartily of the appetizing food, and then, at Harold's suggestion, lay down in their hut for the afternoon siesta. In Turkey every one from bank president to beggar indulges in an hour's nap after lunch.

Harold could do nothing more for his friends that day. He could only continue his study of ways of escape, and much would depend on the peasant, who would not return to the camp before midnight or early next morning.

He carefully examined the lower part of the plain with Ali's field-glasses. He could not follow the Meander all the way as dense groves of reeds hid it, but near the sea it appeared again, winding here and there, and at last making a fairly straight dash for the Middle Ocean. There seemed to be no village or town at the mouth, but Harold made out some faint dots which he judged to be fishing boats. He then turned the glasses up the shore, and made out

a little port on the mainland at the base of Mycale ; and opposite, on the island of Samos, he got the faintest glimpse of a white city.

Two plans now appeared before him for choice. Supposing they succeeded in escaping to the plain : should they strike directly across for Sokia ; or should they take to the Meander, which was comparatively near the base of Besh Parmak ? If they could find a boat or raft there, they could float down the river to the sea.

The latter plan seemed to be the wisest. They could hide within a few hours after leaving the camp. Edith and her father would be tired out, and could rest. Once they had gained the mouth of the river they would be comparatively safe, since Ali could not overtake them before they were able to get some boat to carry them up the coast or to Samos.

This in fact seemed to be the only feasible method, because, as soon as the flight was known, Ali would doubtless send one band at once in the direction of Sokia, and another to scour the plain towards Aidin ; while he might never think of searching the river in its course to the sea.

Harold determined to adopt this plan. If he could gain over the peasant, he would send him at

once to the river to get some boat or raft, and have it hid in readiness. If possible he would also have him send one of his friends to the sea, and have a fishing boat cruise at the mouth of the river ; but if he could not arrange this he would have to trust to chance.

Satisfied with the outlook, Harold turned to Ali, saying—

“ There is no movement of troops from Sokia or Aidin yet. Let us hope that the ruffians at Samsun Dagh have not yet learned of your whereabouts, and that the authorities at Sokia do not know it was you who carried off the English persons.”

“ I am sure,” replied Ali, “ that all we can hope for is a few days of grace. What will happen then, Allah only knows. Selim will soon return, and will tell us how the Sokia people have taken the capture, and our man from Samsun will be back in a day or so with news of the enemy.”

Harold now passed an hour or so in looking at his accounts. Fortunately he carried none but his own money in his money-jacket, for the treasure was in the cave. He counted his own money, and found he had ten pounds, for he had spent little during the few weeks he had been in the band. A cheap watch and some tobacco was the limit of his

dissipation. He had also the fifty pounds which Ali had given him for his sick friend in Smyrna. This sum ought to be sufficient for the journey, as he could draw on Ray if he ever reached Samos.

He then looked at the inventory, and found that Ali had an abundance of arms and provisions. With a shrug of relief Harold reclined on the ground, and directed his thought to Edith.

How frank and womanly she had shown herself when he told her his story! How genuine her gratitude, and how instant her relief! He could see her now, with the tears of joy starting to her eyes, and the smile parting her lips. And her constant thought for her father! What a noble wife she would make, and how he would love to have this girl always near him! She was so womanly, so brave, and so lovely in the beauty of a strong young life and a true high soul! She was also a girl of education and refinement, and in the present trying experience conducted herself with dignity. Though not vain or frivolous, she was careful of her appearance, and always looked neat and fresh. Every avenue from which Harold approached the subject of his thought brought some new thrill of pleasure, and he said to himself that he must and

would succeed in saving her. Ali Effendi had always spoken of the father as the only one who was in danger ; but Harold knew that the daughter was in even greater peril.

CHAPTER VIII

FLIGHT IS ARRANGED

AT two o'clock in the afternoon Selim arrived. The band crowded around him to hear his report. All set the remnants of the noon meal before him, and ordered coffees to be prepared for the four chief men. After Selim had satisfied his hunger, he lighted a cigarette, and while he and the others joined him in coffees, he told the following story—

“ I arrived in Sokia soon after sunset, and left my rifle and cartridge-belt behind a wall near the station. The telegraph operator was fortunately alone, and I went to him and asked him to send the telegram. He read it, and seemed surprised at the message. He said that he must first speak to the station-master, but I drew my knife and told him that if he did not send the telegram at once I would kill him. He immediately put his hand on the brass knob, and jerked out some message. I told him that if I afterwards found out that he had changed

the telegram, I would seek him out wherever he was and kill him. I added that we had friends in every province, and that he would never escape. He got quite white, and swore that he had translated the message into English, and sent it word for word. I then told him to hold his tongue, and to tell no one, not even his master, that he had sent the message. He promised, and I then took the telegram from his hands and left the station, being sure that he would not speak to any one.

"I then went to the chief khan, and ordered a coffee, listening to what the people were talking about as I was drinking it. The yard was full of men who had come in from their work. I knew that all of them would be talking about the capture of the English people. I had bought a box of cigarettes from the khangé, and smoked these one after the other, as I was too tired to roll any.

"One man said that it must be some new band who had taken the English people. Perhaps they had come from Samos, knowing that the English were going to visit Priene or Miletus, and so expected to make a few hundred pounds out of them. Another said that it might be Ali Effendi's band, but every one laughed at this, as they said you were at Samsun Dag, and would have all you could do to

protect yourself. Another man said that you would never take English people for ransom, as you were very friendly with them.

“ I then asked how much ransom had been asked ; but no one could answer this question, as the brigands had gone off at once, and had sent no message. ‘ They must be clever men whoever they are,’ said the khangé, ‘ for no one saw them in the country around ; and the soldiers and muleteers, who went with the English people, seemed to have been given the “ evil eye ” when they returned. They said that they had been seized and bound in a second ; that they did not know where the brigands had come from or gone ; and that they lay bound until a peasant cut their ropes in the morning.

“ ‘ I suppose,’ continued the khangé, ‘ that the Kaimakam telegraphed at once to Smyrna, and that some Turkish troops will be sent here to-night. If they stay here long they will ruin me, for they never pay for anything.’

“ As there was nothing more to be learned, I lay down and slept until morning ; for the two-and-a-half days’ march had made me very tired. I went to the station at eight this morning, and found that only about a hundred *zabtiehs*¹ had arrived, so I

¹ Turkish soldiers.

went to the wall, and took my rifle and cartridge-belt and set out for here."

"I am greatly pleased," observed Ali Effendi, "that our band is not suspected of the seizure. Only the British Consul, and the telegraph clerks on the English railway, know of my connection with it. I think they will keep the matter quiet for the present. Let us resume our regular life, and trust to Allah to preserve us. Selim, as soon as you have rested, send out bands of men and make deposits of arms and provisions at our different camping places on the range: leave two men on guard as sentinels at each place, and change them every day. Osman, take ten men, and go to the top of the range, and wait there until I relieve you. Keep the men at rifle practice, and offer prizes of a medjid for marksmanship. Mehmet, choose twenty men, and keep guard on our captives. I will hold you responsible for their health and security. In case of alarm the signal for you all to collect at this ledge will be five rifle shots, fired at intervals of one minute."

Ali Effendi now saw to the placing of the outposts. He chose only young men who were good shots at long distance, and asked Mehmet for his tables to consult. He commanded these youths to permit no man to enter the circle except the peasant

whom they had already seen. Ali then placed his youths as follows : ten men at the foot of the mountain at intervals of one thousand yards each ; five men in the plain at the same distance from each other, and thirty men on the mountain. These formed a complete circle two miles in diameter, and left a space of about seven hundred yards between each man. He commanded the men to choose a hiding-place, which would, nevertheless, give them an unobstructed view of their district, and to keep absolutely perfect watch.

"I will myself go to your stations from time to time," he observed, "and if I am able to approach any one of you unobserved, I shall shoot him on the spot. You may be relieved each day at sunrise and sunset, but you will continue on duty until replaced."

Harold had already chosen Mustapha, and eighteen of the older men. The others started off, and after a time the tired outposts came in. Harold then posted his own band on the ledge and in front of the hut, and commanded Mustapha to prepare food for the prisoners.

He realized how his plans would have been upset if Mustapha or himself had been sent on some expedition.

"We must make our escape at once," he mused,

"for Ali may at any moment order me on some tramp or give Mustapha some commission, and it would be suicide for us to demur. Well! I must make all preparations, and seize upon the first favourable opportunity for flight. If only the peasant would return, and I could win him to my side, I would make the attempt as soon as he could return from the river. Each day will bring increased danger and difficulty."

Harold became very nervous as evening approached, but he was compelled to hide his anxiety both from Ali and from Edith. It would be fatal to let his chief see any change in him, and it would be discouraging to show Edith any signs of doubt or fear.

He therefore forced himself to sit down by Ali and to speak with him about the outrage at Samsun Dag. He suggested various plans to his chief for evading pursuit if the troops came to Besh Parmak, and advised that litters be made, so that the English people might be carried from place to place when they could no longer walk.

Ali went to inspect his outposts some two hours before sunset, and Harold immediately determined to bring Edith and her father to the ledge, and to explain his plans for flight. They were very glad

to be free from Ali's presence, and to enjoy a talk with their countryman. They came and sat at the border of the ledge, and Harold traced out their course.

"We must get as quickly as we can," he said, "to the reeds you see below. Once there you will be safe for a moment at least. I hope to find a boat or raft in the river, so that we may float or pole our way to the sea. There we must get a fishing-smack to take us to Samos, or walk along the shore to the first port. It is useless to think of crossing the plain to Sokia, as Ali would be sure to overtake us. Now try to fix this plan firmly in your minds, for I may be wounded in the flight and so be unable to conduct you all the way. Keep a supply of chocolate and brandy with you.

"If I am obliged to remain and cover your flight, Mustapha or a peasant will conduct you to the reeds. Hide there until a boat or raft can be provided. When you reach the sea get a boat to take you to Samos, or walk along the shore to Scala Nora. Once at either of these places you will be safe. At Scala Nora you can take the carriage to Ephesus; at Samos there is a British Vice-consul. Your father knows Greek, and can make his way at either of these places. I hope that there will be no hitch in

our plans, and that I can accompany you ; but if there is I will remain behind to keep back the brigands. I am a good shot, and have one hundred cartridges."

Edith and her father were both much moved at Harold's words, for they saw his fixed determination that they should escape from unknown perils at whatever cost to himself. They thanked him for his devotion, and expressed the hope that they would all soon be in safety. Harold told them that as soon as their supplies arrived, they should make up two or three small parcels of absolute necessities, and have them ready to be picked up at a moment's notice. He then gave Edith the glasses, and pointed out each step of the proposed route, that she might have it indelibly impressed on her memory.

Ali returned at sunset, and said he would not relieve the outposts that night.

"We have all had too easy a time of late," he remarked, "and must get used to hard work again. I shall go out once or twice during the night, and see if my men are watching. In case of alarm, Mehmet, you will load the treasure upon yourself, Mustapha, and some of your men, and will then take the English people to the top of the mountain. Osman will be there to receive you, and I will immediately follow."

Ali then told Harold to ask the English guests how they had enjoyed the day. They answered that they liked their hut, and were as comfortable as they could reasonably expect to be, and hoped to have many additional comforts next morning.

The chief then asked the professor to tell him more of the Greek he was so much interested in.

"This plain," said he, "seems to me a barren and very dull sort of place, and I do not see what interest the Greek could have found in it."

"Oh," replied the scholar, "in those days there was a vast difference. These mountains were all carpeted with virgin forests. The sea covered much of the plain, and Greek or Persian galleys were moored in harbours now filled up with the deposits of the Meander. Priene was then a seaport with a huge commerce, and when Alexander stopped there it had one of the finest temples in the world. Miletus yonder was a mammoth city, and her children founded over eighty colonies on the shores of the neighbouring seas. It had the strongest fortress in the whole region, and had temples and theatres equalling any in the world. Ephesus, now a marsh, was then the wonder of the earth; and even Sardis, beyond Mount Tivoli, yet basked in the sunset of its former splendour. Besh Parmak, too, is celebrated

in story, for it is said that it was here, perhaps where we now sit, that Artemis kissed the sleeping Endymion.

“ But what a change now ! ” the professor mused : “ this fertile plain left untilled ; the mountains stripped of their wooden wealth ; and the mines of gold, of iron, and of copper forgotten or unworked ! The traveller finds only weather-worn sepulchres of departed glory, and where once was freedom and buoyant life, stagnation and tyranny now reign. If Alexander returned to-morrow he would not find the present Asia worth conquering, but would turn his eyes to the Balkans and beyond, and repeat his former victories there. Where he formerly met with the greatest resistance he would now find no foe worthy of his steel. The countries around the Granicus, Miletus, the Issus, Tyre and Arbela are now either deserted, or peopled with races who are slothful and ignorant. But the day will come when Nature will repeople these districts, when these valleys of Asia Minor will teem again with life, and when the vast plains of Mesopotamia will yield anew their life-giving store to a countless population.”

The professor had quite forgotten his audience and his danger. He was back again in his study at Reading, bending over the oft-conned map, and

looking forward to the future when the Asian races should awake from their slumber of ages, and take the place yet open for them among the sons of men.

Harold translated as best he could this talk to Ali, but the latter made no comment. He gazed silently at this scholar for whom time and space had no restrictions, and whom even discomfort and danger could not disconcert.

After the evening meal Edith and her father retired to their hut, and Harold took his post near by to await the coming of the peasant. He understood how much depended upon his ability to secure his assistance, and with anxious mind tried to form some notion of what to do in case the peasant refused to help him.

"I might be able to get to the river without him," he thought, "but without some boat or raft we should be helpless; we could not make our way through the reeds and the mud even in a week. We might try to cross to the other side of the swamp, and skirt it on our way to Spielya, for we could always retreat into the reeds and hide; but it would be a long and painful journey, and I doubt if Edith and her father could accomplish it. I *must* induce this peasant to assist me, and will threaten his life if all else fails."

Harold passed the first half of the night in nervous torture, and was then cheered by the rattling of stones which announced that some animals were approaching. He leaped up, and soon made out the form of a man who was leading several donkeys loaded with bundles. It was the peasant, who had exerted himself to the utmost to earn the promised reward. Harold took his eagerness as a good augury, and helped him to unload the animals. Ali Effendi came to see the new-comer, and was pleased to know that the things had arrived for making his prisoners comfortable. They gave the peasant food, and Ali asked if there was any change in Sokia. The man replied that a number of Turkish soldiers were settled in the town, but that everything was quiet there.

They talked together for a while, and then Ali started on his tour of inspection. This was Harold's opportunity and he at once improved it.

"You may be surprised at the interest my chief shows in the welfare of the English people," he began. "He already repents of his rashness in carrying off these innocent people, who are representatives of a nation which has always treated him well, and for whom he has genuine respect and love. I have observed Ali closely to-day, and he has more than

once expressed fear lest his captives become ill. The old hodja is delicate, and his daughter tells me she induced her father to come on this trip for the sake of his health. But the exposure and privation here may bring on consumption, or some fatal illness, and then what would be our position? Ali could never make the Government believe he had not been harsh or cruel to his prisoners, and he would be a marked man for life. The English also would doubtless send an army, and if we escaped the Moslem troops it would only be to fall upon the bayonets of the English.

“ Ali realizes all this, and has as much as told me that if the captives could be returned to safety without his knowledge, he would be more than pleased. He is a proud man as you know, and even I, who am his treasurer and confidant, cannot speak to him openly on the subject. I am resolved, however, to save him and his captives, and shall undertake this task at once. I have one of our best men who has promised to aid me. There will be little danger to us, and none to you if you will join us.

“ Listen now to my plan, and remember your part in it. You will at once return to the Meander. You will secure in some way a boat; if that is impossible you will get some of your friends to help

you build a raft ; tear down some house, if necessary, and make a float large enough to carry five people. Provide poles or paddles, and place them on the craft ; and bid your friends bring bread, charcoal and *yaourt*. If possible get one of your friends to go to the mouth of the river, and engage a fishing boat to wait there until we appear. Return to me as quickly as you possibly can. When we are once at the mouth of the river I will give you twenty pounds. Here are the five pounds which I promised you before : if you are back here again at midnight to-morrow I will give you a like sum."

The peasant had listened carefully to these words. He had no suspicions aroused, for he knew Mehmet to be in Ali's confidence and to have charge of his treasure. The offer of the twenty pounds nearly took his breath away, as it was more than he could save in a lifetime. He fumbled the five pounds he had just received. But he was a clever man, and he asked the treasurer if the outposts would permit the people to depart. Harold answered—

" I will see to that. Ali, of course, does not want any of the band to know his wish, and he will no doubt appear to be furious when it is learned that the prisoners have escaped. You know the paths of the mountain intimately. When we leave this

camp you will lead us directly along the mountain towards the sea. I will guarantee that the outposts will never know that we have passed. When we are well outside the circle of guards you will lead the way straight to the river ; and once we are on the boat or raft we can hide so that no one will find us, for Ali will look for us in other directions."

The peasant's confidence was fully established, and he was so anxious to obtain the promised fortune that he immediately agreed to Harold's proposal. Harold then told him that their companion was Mustapha, and asked the peasant his name. The man replied "Sakli," and then went on to say that it would be difficult to procure a boat at such short notice. He had three friends who lived near the river, and they could doubtless build some kind of a raft. There was an old house on the opposite bank, and they would tear this down, if necessary, and make some kind of a float. Sakli said he had some ropes on his donkeys, and could twist the green reeds together so as to tie the boards and logs firmly. He asked Harold when he proposed to start.

"To-morrow night at the latest," was the answer, "for Ali may change his mind or the old Englishman may get sick."

He then gave Sakli five pounds for his friends, and

the man mounted one of the donkeys. Harold told him to get some fowls as an excuse for coming back, and the peasant rode off through the gloom.

Harold gave a great sigh of relief as he listened to the departure of his new ally. He liked the man, and had much confidence in his ability to carry out his orders, and to act quickly in the matter. He knew that Sakli would move heaven and earth to gain the twenty pounds. Harold next thought of the probable coming of new recruits from Samsun Dag, and fervently hoped they might be delayed, and that nothing would happen to thwart his plans.

He longed for day to come that he might see Edith and her father, and tell them of his success, and he resolved to walk with them next afternoon in the direction outlined to the peasant, and examine the ground.

Harold now saw the necessity of obtaining some sleep to supply energy for the struggles of the next night. So he lay down in the open air in front of Edith's hut, and slept until nearly sunrise.

As the morning light broke upon the distant hills five shots rang out from the ledge, and were echoed from the precipice behind. There was an interval of one minute between each report, and at the second shot Edith appeared at the door of her hut and

looked anxiously out. She saw Harold, and asked what was the matter.

"It is only the chief calling in his men for orders, and accustoming them to alarms. I have good news for you. The peasant has come and gone. He has agreed to serve us. To-night at midnight I hope we may start. I will tell you more later."

Harold then went to the ledge, and stood beside Ali. The men came pouring in. First appeared the thirty outposts, swelling the band to sixty. The fifteen men at the foot of the mountain and in the plain came next. Osman and his band appeared some time after, as they had had a long descent from the top of the mountain. They seemed to be almost frozen, and icicles dangled from their moustaches. Selim came last, exactly two hours after the signal had been fired. The band now numbered ninety-four, as Selim had left two of his men at each of the places where provisions and ammunition had been deposited.

The men all washed at the brook, and prayers were attended to. Coffee was then made for the whole band, and Ali and Harold inspected the men's rifles and equipment. Extra ammunition and provisions were dealt out to each man, and Ali

proclaimed an extra month's pay. It took another hour to go through with this work.

It was now eight o'clock in the morning. Ali rose, and addressed his men—

“ I have called you all in, that I might see how quickly you could assemble if there was need. I also wished to see each man, and to ascertain if any were ill or improperly equipped. I have granted this extra wage to-day that I might have your best service during the next few hours which will probably decide our fate. There will be further rewards for you when we have passed this crisis. You will show every respect to my English visitors. The men on duty will permit no one to enter or leave their lines excepting myself, or the peasant who brings our supplies. If messengers come from Sam-sun Dagħ or from the plain, the guard whose beat they enter will not leave his post, but will fire three shots in rapid succession. A man will then be sent to receive his charge. Any violation of these rules will bring instant death. Exact fulfilment of them will ensure continued patronage and good pay.”

The men cheered Ali, and thanked him for his generosity. The chief then placed the outposts for the next twenty hours. After this he examined the plain with his glasses. There he saw nothing which could

cause alarm, so he ordered the rest of the band, with the exception of Harold's detachment, to follow, and set out on a long march to various points on the range, telling Harold that he might not be back before sunset, and to give the signal if anything alarming occurred.

After Ali's departure Harold posted Mustapha at the border of the ledge, and showed him how to use the field-glasses. He then ordered some men to carry the bundles which had come from Sokia to the hut. He resolved to carry out all his proposed improvements, as the work would occupy his mind and give him an opportunity of conversing with the fair Edith.

Some men were sent to cut fresh pine boughs. These were stripped, and the fragrant needles were spread evenly on the ground. The canvas was now stretched over them, and stones were placed at the corners to keep the carpet smooth.

Harold next sawed the boards into different lengths, and made three shutters, two of them short and narrow and the other wide and long. These he hung from the roof with straps, and cut windows and a door in the walls of the hut. He placed some poles beside these openings, so that the shutters could be propped up when light or air was needed,

or when the occupants wished to have the door open. The shutters fell into their places as soon as the poles were removed, and thus secured warmth and privacy for the girl and her father.

Harold now took the other square of canvas, and hung it across the middle of the room, and so made two apartments. In much of this work he was aided by Edith, and he found it very delightful to have such intimate intercourse with her. They drifted unconsciously into talking of England, and of their families, and soon felt like old friends ; for their common danger ripened their acquaintance, and before Harold had completed the rougher work they spoke to each other as if they had been brought up together. Edith knew some of her companion's comrades at Oxford, and Harold had met some of Edith's Reading friends, so that they found abundant matter for conversation.

Harold presently sat down and started to make a bench. It reminded him of what the peasant perhaps was now doing, and he told Edith of his talk with Sakli, and of his full confidence in him.

"I feel sure now," he continued, "that we shall escape. If only he returns in time I shall make the attempt to-night. He knows the country perfectly. He has friends near the river. Even if he has not

found a boat, and even if he cannot make a raft, though perhaps I am borrowing trouble, we must set out nevertheless, and skirt the marsh. We must not remain here longer than to-night, since any moment may bring developments that will render our escape impossible."

"Well, Harold," for Edith had progressed to the point of addressing him thus, "I am sure that God has not supplied us with hope so far to withdraw it now, and plunge us again into danger and despair. I only trust we may all reach safety. It would sadden my life exceedingly if you were to be wounded or captured."

The last words were said in a low and earnest tone, which caused Harold to look up. As he gazed for an instant into Edith's eyes, he saw something there which gave him renewed energy and confidence.

"Be assured," he said in the same tone, "that although your safety and that of your father is my chief aim, yet I truly hope the time will soon come when I can appear before you in Christian garb, and talk with you as an English or American gentleman."

By noon the bench and table were finished. The bales were unpacked and the provisions were set on the table. Edith prepared a regular English lunch of potted meats, biscuits, jam, and tea.

After lunch, Harold begged Edith and her father to lie down and rest, telling them he would take them for a walk as soon as Ali returned.

He went himself to the border of the ledge and reclined on the ground by Mustapha's side. He heard three shots fired by one of the outposts, and ordered a man to go down and see what was the matter, and if there was a messenger to bring him up.

Ali Effendi had also heard the shots, for he came to the camp in the course of forty minutes. He had left Osman and Selim on the mountain to erect another camp, and said they would not be back until dark.

While they were waiting for the brigand to return with the messenger, Harold told Ali of his work at the hut, and Ali asked if the English people would receive him. Harold went to the hut, and informed Edith of the outlaw's request, and she answered that he might come.

Ali then washed himself at the brook. He came and sat on the bench which Harold had made, and seemed much pleased at the comfort around. He received the thanks of his guests in silent approval and seeing some tea steaming in a pot, he asked if he might have a cup.

"I have tasted the drink before at some English houses," he explained, "and I like it very much: it warms a man and makes him stronger."

Edith handed him a cup, although it required some effort. She consoled herself with the thought that it was the first, and probably the last time that she would have thus to outrage her instincts. Ali asked if they needed anything more, and Edith replied they wanted nothing but their freedom.

"We are helplessly in your power," she said; "you have treated us humanely, and have made us comfortable. Add one thing more and give us leave to depart."

Ali did not reply when the request was translated to him, but set down his cup and strolled back to the ledge. He told Harold he hoped the man below was a messenger from Samsun Dagh, and had brought news of fresh recruits. He would be very glad of a few new men, as he had not enough to place the proper number of outposts and still have enough for the many expeditions he had planned.

"At Samsun Dagh," he observed, "a small number of men was sufficient, because the meadow was open, and the high peak was near. There we had all the peasants and mountaineers as allies. Here we have a huge range which it is impossible

to patrol properly, and no people dwelling around to aid us."

As he was speaking Harold's "aide-de-camp" appeared, bringing in a man who was poorly dressed and evidently deficient in intelligence. Both Harold and Ali recognized him as a half-witted Moslem they had seen at Samsun Dagh. The man spoke some unintelligible words to Ali, and then handed Harold a letter, for he was clever enough to know that Ali could not read.

It proved to be a message from a hodja at Kiz Geul, and ran as follows—

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"The man returned from your camp yesterday. He was weak and ill with fever. He told me of your wish to have some of our mountaineers join your band, but I cannot reach them at once because they are scattered all over the range. Your wife and daughters are safe in this valley, as the troop have left and will not return. Your servant brought them from Samsun Dagh this morning, as the pine forest was burning and the place was too hot for them. Some of the Samsun Dagh people came here, and the rest went to Mysa. Our hamlet is in ruins, and I am living in a hovel on the olive hill. Your

messenger gave me the bag of gold, and I am distributing the money to the needy. I have sent to Mysa for food, and can supply all wants for the present.

"I hope you are safe and may soon return. I enclose a letter from your wife at Mysa.

"Your servant,

"MAHMUD."

Harold now unfolded the enclosed sheet. It was written in bad Osmanli, and he could hardly read it. At last he made out that Ali's second wife had given birth to a son ; that she was too weak to go to Smyrna yet ; that she had not been molested, and that the treasure was safe in the garden. Some extravagant praises were given to the child, but Harold could not make out what they were. He read the words "strong," "yelling," "fat," but could not connect them.

Ali made no comment on the personal features of the letters, but his face lighted up. He rose and expanded his chest, he closed his eyes for a moment, as if giving thanks to Allah for the birth of a son and heir, then he sat down and exclaimed—

"Well ! there is no hope of a reinforcement at present. If the troops appear we must move to the

other side of the range. Let us hope that they will be recalled soon, and that we may return to our friends at Samsun Dag and Kiz Geul. If we ever do I shall rebuild the villages. I will plant new pines, and my children and grandchildren may yet point out how their outlaw ancestor restored the destruction wrought by the emissaries of the Government."

He seemed pleased with this idea, this hope. New courage seemed to be born in his breast. He glanced towards the hut, and his countenance clouded momentarily as he realized the responsibility he had incurred.

"If only these English people keep well," he murmured, "until I can get some assurance from the Government, I will conduct them back to Sokia, and will then return to Samsun Dagh."

Harold remarked that the captives might like to take a walk. He went to the hut, and waited for Edith and her father to appear. He heard the clatter of tins and bottles. They were evidently packing some bundles. He called to Edith, and she raised the door and appeared.

"We have been making up the packages you suggested," she said. "We have also put on warm clothing, and I have some wraps ready."

Harold suggested the walk, and she and her father came out at once, and the three started along the mountain, on a line parallel to the plain.

There was no direct path, but goats and sheep had marked out narrow ways, zigzagging here and there in slanting lines. Fortunately there was little undergrowth, only a few groves of mint and thyme, and these made cushions in case of a fall. Harold noted the way carefully. They could always see the outline of the plain, the ocean, and the mountains beyond. Moreover, the nights were then cloudless, and the stars would give them direction.

They came to the mile limit, and met the outpost, who was vigilantly watching. Harold told Edith and her father to sit down, to examine the slope of the mountain, and to map out a course to the river. He then gave the watchman his tobacco-box, and after it was returned, and they both had lighted their cigarettes, they spoke together for a time and Harold gave the man the latest news from Samsun Dagh.

Meanwhile Harold's eye traced a course from his position to the river. The declivity was steep, but free from trees : some underbush clothed the mountain-side, thus offering easy means of descent. The river seemed to be some one-and-a-

half hours' walk from the foot of the mountain, so that within four or five hours after leaving the camp they might hope to be among the reeds on the banks, if they were not previously arrested. It would be necessary to seize the guard before he could give the alarm, and to continue for an hour or more along the mountain before striking for the plain, in order to avoid the other guards who were posted there.

Harold studied this man, who would be on duty at night. He was one of the recruits from Abdullah's band, a man about twenty-eight years old, strong and active. Harold deeply wished he could drug the man's tobacco, so that he would be asleep when they arrived. He now made up his mind to go in front of the peasant, who should lead the captives, and speak with the man. Mustapha would go with him, and when the man was off his guard they would seize, bind and gag him, and then Sakli should lead the captives in front, while he and Mustapha brought up the rear.

Harold now suggested to Edith and the professor that they should return, and on the walk back he outlined his scheme to them.

"As soon as you finish your supper lie down and rest. At midnight raise the door of your hut, and

go as noiselessly as possible about two hundred yards in this direction. Wait there until I come. If the peasant does not appear we must set out nevertheless; but let us hope, and you must pray that he will be in time."

Harold then went to the ledge. He cleaned his rifle and examined his cartridges, and saw that all was in order. He next thought of the cords that would be necessary to bind the outpost. He went to the cave, and obtained some pieces, which he wound around his body beneath his girdle. He presently sat down on the turf, and went over his plan, but could think of no defect in it.

Mustapha was washing at the brook, and Harold followed his example.

"I have talked with the English lord," he said, "and he has promised us two hundred pounds if we will enable them to escape. I have your friend Sakli to help us, and I hope he is now on his way here after having provided means for our flight on the river. We will set out at midnight. I have found who is the outpost on the way. It is Ibrahim, of Abdullah's band. We will go ahead and seize him while he is talking with us, and leave him in a position where he can do us no harm. When we reach the sea we will get some fishing boat to take us to

Samos, and at Vathy the lord will give us our money. We will divide it equally, and make the lord pay Sakli himself."

Mustapha grunted, "*Pече*"; and smiled at the thought of the hundred pounds. He went to the edge of the camp, and looked down into the plain, as if picking out some vineyard that he intended to buy.

The sun set and the evening meal was served. Osman and Selim's bands came in, and all the party seemed to be dead tired. Ali also, who had not slept during the four previous nights, was very much fatigued. Harold considered this a good sign, as the vigilant chief might not visit the outposts before morning. The ledge was so crowded with men that Ali sent half of them to sleep in the cave, and the rest lay down on the turf and were soon snoring.

Harold had posted his own band between the ledge and the hut, and himself lay down on a bank about ten yards from the door. Mustapha reclined beside him and was soon snoring audibly. One by one the other men joined in the chorus, and Harold from his higher position could dimly make out the line of bodies stretching to the border of the ledge, where a small fire showed Ali and Osman sitting, their heads nodding now and again. He watched their

figures as if fascinated, and was exceedingly relieved when he saw them change their positions to the recumbent.

At ten o'clock Harold thought he heard a sound. He looked over the line of bodies towards the ledge, but all was silent. He left his rifle on the ground, and crawled to the hut. He saw a man crouching at the back with some dead fowls at his feet. It was Sakli, to whom the magical words of "twenty pounds" had given the wings of an eagle and the tread of a cat.

"All is ready;" he whispered; "we patched up a dugout which we found in the old house, and it is now launched on the river. Let us start at once, for we must go very slowly until we reach the plain."

Harold crawled to the shutter and whispered, "Edith."

A low voice answered, "Well."

"Come at once. All is ready. Caution your father to make no noise."

Harold then told Sakli to lead the strangers a few yards to the right, and wait for him. He then crawled back to the bank, and lay down beside Mustapha. That worthy brigand was sound asleep. Harold had to press his hand several times before he could awaken him; then he whispered—

“ Follow me at once ; our lives depend upon our absolute noiselessness.”

They crawled away, and then stood upright. Harold turned and cast a last look in Ali's direction. The dying glow of the fire revealed Ali Effendi stretched out upon the ledge, with the faithful Osman by his side. Harold then set his face to the sea, fervently hoping that he was bidding a final adieu to the band which he had entered with such eagerness three weeks before at Bel Kairé.

CHAPTER IX

A TERRIBLE JOURNEY TO THE SEA

EDITH and her father were waiting for Harold, who now took the lead, telling Sakli to follow with the captives. He told him to keep some distance in the rear, and to stop when he lighted a match. They walked quietly for some distance, and then Harold and his ally marched boldly ahead, and spoke in an ordinary tone to each other. Harold intended that the outpost should hear them, and he hoped that he would recognize their voices, and be warned of their coming. They made a good deal of noise so that the others would be guided, and that the crackling of their tread might not be noticed.

Harold had noted a small tree which was about two hundred yards from the outpost's position, and when he reached this he lighted a match. He then exclaimed—

“Mustapha, let us see if this guard is sleeping,” and advanced to his position.

The guard was standing erect with his rifle in his hands, but when he recognized Harold and Mustapha's voices he lowered it.

"I thought that it might be the Effendi," he said, "and I well remember his threat. What brings you here?"

"The chief was tired and told me to go the round," replied Harold; "we will smoke together, and then Mustapha and I will visit the other men."

Harold was a connoisseur in tobacco, and the outpost remembered his cigarette of the afternoon, so he took Harold's box with alacrity. He wetted his finger and drew off a paper from the white pack, and filled it to its utmost capacity with the golden shreds. Harold chatted with him while he rolled the cigarette, for the man had his rifle between his knees; but when he had lit a match, and had raised his hand to light the soothing weed, Harold seized him by the throat while Mustapha pinioned his arms behind him. The man kicked and struggled, but he could not cry out, for Harold was choking him vigorously, while the burly Mustapha held him as in a vice. Harold now pulled out his handkerchief, and stuffed it into the man's mouth. He ordered Mustapha to hold him in his arms while he drew the cords from beneath his girdle. He then passed

one of the cords over his open mouth, and tied the gag firmly behind the man's head. His hands were then tied behind his back, and his feet and legs were fastened so tightly that the cords would have cut into his flesh had not his leather leggings and thick trousers formed cushions.

Harold gave the man's rifle to Mustapha and hurried back to reassure the captives, who must have heard the noise of the struggle and were doubtless very anxious.

"All is well so far," he half shouted, "and the first fight for freedom is gained. Lead on, Sakli, for we are now in your hands. Make all possible speed, and remember that the twenty pounds are yours when we reach the sea."

Sakli then advanced, followed by Edith and her father. Harold and Mustapha brought up the rear. They were obliged to pass the spot where the brigand outpost lay bound, and although Edith did not see the man, Harold caught the glint of his eyes as he rolled them helplessly, and our knight laughed as he passed him.

The party had to stumble over stones and clumps of heather, and made a good deal of noise, go as carefully as they could, and Harold feared lest either of his English protégés should sprain an ankle. There was

danger, too, that one of the neighbouring outposts might hear the disturbance, although they would probably attend only to their own districts.

After the party had gone one mile from the scene of the struggle, they stopped for a moment and listened. All was quiet. Harold came up and asked Edith how she had fared.

"Very well," she replied bravely; "I fear that my shoes have suffered, and I have had a few wrenches; but I can endure anything if only we can escape."

Professor Lovejoy had suffered no mishap, and was greatly elated at the prospect of a speedy return to his books.

"Press on, press on," he cried, "let us run, stumble, or roll, as long as we lengthen the distance between us and that den of brigands."

Sakli started on a fresh spurt, and the others plunged into the darkness. Harold longed to support Edith, but he perceived that he and Mustapha must remain behind, as at any moment the alarm might be given. He was glad now that they had started so early, because Ali Effendi might awaken early and go out, and Harold would not feel it safe to be moving while the redoubtable Ali was on foot.

The party reached a path at last which seemed to

lead directly to the plain. Sakli took this route, and they had nearly reached the foot of the mountain, when they heard a shot fired. Harold took out a match, and lit a cigarette he had been rolling. He noted that it was one o'clock, and by the dull glow of his weed he followed the second-hand on his watch. After one minute's interval a second report rang out.

"It is Ali giving the alarm," he cried. "We must make all speed and reach the river."

He did not add that the absence of the outpost at the rendezvous on the ledge would be discovered, and would thereby give a clue to the direction the fugitives had taken.

Before the third shot was fired the party were hurrying down the mountain-side. The fourth report followed with awful exactness, and it reminded Harold of the method in all of Ali's actions, and he had no doubt that a prompt and systematic search would at once commence. The fifth shot sounded faintly in the distance, and the faintness of it gave Harold hope.

"We have three hours' start," thought he, "and we can at least come to the river in good time. Once in the plain we can run, if necessary; and since the dugout is ready we ought easily to distance our

pursuers. Ali has not nearly enough men to scour the whole plain, and if one or two of his satellites appear, Mustapha and I can promptly dispose of them."

They arrived at the foot of the mountain at two o'clock. A peasant met them at the bottom of the path, and spoke some words to Sakli. The latter told him to assist the English lord. Sakli then took Edith's arm, and hurried away to the river. Harold and Mustapha followed close behind, and it was so dark that they would have lost the way if they had not done so.

Sakli led the way directly to the river where the dugout was hidden, regardless of the obstacles in the way; and it was an awful march, much worse than that on the mountain. They floundered through stagnant pools; they stumbled across ridges where tufts of cane grew as high as their heads; they crossed gullies which opened before them like deep pits; but Sakli knew his course, and half carried Edith; while the other peasant proved a rougher but equally able assistant.

Even Harold found the pace a killing one, and he wondered how long it would last. Every fibre in his body seemed relaxed, and his eyes bulged from their sockets in his attempt to pierce the

gloom, which seemed here far deeper than on the mountain.

"Courage!" shouted Sakli at last, "ten minutes more and we can rest."

But what a ten minutes it was! Pushing aside brambles that scratched hands and faces; dragging the feet through mats of wiry grass that cut the ankles like knives; falling headlong at times into bogs, from which it was horribly difficult to escape; but still struggling on, at last mechanically.

When it seemed that human endurance had reached its limit, Harold heard the people in advance stop; and when he came up to them he heard the voice of another peasant speak from some deeper pit.

They had reached the river! Harold leaned over the steep bank and saw the dim outline of a scow.

"Bravo! my brave Sakli," he said, "you have done nobly, and you shall have twice twenty pounds for your reward, and your friends too shall not be forgotten."

"Are you alive, Edith?" he continued, addressing a figure which was reclining on the ground.

"Yes, thank God, and this brave man!" was the answer. "I am alive and without hurt. This man has carried me most of the way else I should

never have been here. My father, too, is safe, and, thank God ! you are with us, Harold."

"Let us get at once into the boat, and go as far as we can before daylight," shouted Harold in Turkish.

"Edith, if you have some brandy take a little, and give us some, for we are not yet out of danger."

Edith took a bottle from her parcel, and gave it to Harold.

"Drink and give to your comrades," she said; "my father and I will eat some chocolate, and will soon be quite strong again."

Harold knocked the neck of the bottle against the butt of his rifle, and took a few gulps. He handed the flask to Mustapha. Although the latter had never tasted the fiery stuff before, yet he followed his leader's example, and drank a little. The two peasants drank the rest, and seemed much revived.

"To the boat at once," shouted Sakli ; and taking Edith in his arms he lowered her to the man in the dugout, who caught her and deposited his burden in the bow of the craft. Professor Lovejoy was next placed in safety, and Harold and Mustapha slid down the bank into the same receptacle. The peasant now clambered up, and Sakli took his place.

Harold threw four gold pieces to these two men who were now standing on the bank, and then Sakli took a long pole and pushed away.

The dugout was a clumsy affair, but it was large enough for the party, and was a great improvement upon a raft, as it was long and narrow, and could be propelled more easily. Sakli had placed some bundles of cane in the bottom, and Harold arranged a kind of seat where Edith could rest.

The current of the river was slow, but the passengers could see, from the outline of the reeds against the sky, that they were making some progress. After resting a little Sakli stood up, and propelled the craft along with his branch of poplar.

The moon now rose above Besh Parmak, and cast a feeble light through the reeds. Harold looked at his watch, and saw that it was four o'clock.

"Before daylight," he observed, "we shall be in the thickest part of the swamp, and I know from hard experience that it is impossible to approach the river from either side. Unless Ali's men get a boat—and they can get a flying-machine as easily—we are safe for the present; and with every hour we are nearing our destination."

Sakli poled away for an hour or so, and then, as it was getting quite light, he rested.

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"How long will it take us to reach the open country," asked Harold.

"Some ten hours at this rate," Sakli replied. "I have often been over the course, carrying grain to the mouth of the river. The stream meanders here and there, and turns to every point of the compass."

"It will be best," Harold observed, "to let the boat drift until nine o'clock. We can all rest while floating, and you can tell me what progress we are making. If necessary Mustapha and I will take turns at poling, so that we may reach the sea at sunset."

Harold looked in the morning light at his companions. The marks of travel stood out prominently on all. Even Edith had lost her neat and fresh appearance. Her dress was torn, and covered with mud and burrs. Her face was slightly scratched, and her hair was almost falling down. The professor looked old and haggard, and Mustapha looked like a wounded brigand. Harold wondered what he himself resembled, and wished the whole party might land somewhere for a few minutes and have a good wash. He asked Sakli if there was a sheltered spot near by where the banks of the river were low, and where they could land for a moment.

Sakli answered that there was a break in the

swamp about two miles further down. The river there described almost a complete circle, and the four could land and walk across while he poled the boat around the bend. Harold then told Edith of the proposed stop, and she seemed much pleased at the idea.

In the course of time the low bank appeared. It was here only two feet above the river, and no doubt a lake covered the spot in winter. They landed, and Sakli said that he would appear at the other side within twenty minutes. Harold then told Edith that he and the other men would go to the other side, and bade her cry out if she was alarmed at anything. Edith thanked her knight for his delicacy, and Harold, with the professor and Mustapha, walked to the other shore, and had a good wash. They scraped the mud off their garments, and sat down to wait for Edith and Sakli.

The professor was much refreshed by his ablutions. He munched some chocolate, and handed a piece to his companions.

"I am glad in some ways to have been at Besh Parmak," he commented, "for I now have a photograph of this valley negatived on my memory. If we only reach Tigani in safety, I shall be glad rather

than otherwise, for this experience. It will teach me caution for the future, and I shall never again bring my daughter to these barbarous countries. I am sorry not to have been able to visit Priene when I was so near it ; but I have seen its position, and it is easy to study the chief relics of all these places in the British Museum."

"We pass close to Miletus," remarked Harold, "and this evening you will see the ruins of the theatre quite plainly. There are good ruins also at Tigani, if you care to visit them when we land there."

Edith now came forward looking quite spruce. She had pinned up the rents in her garments, and there was little to criticize in her appearance. She smiled when she saw the change effected in her father and the other men, and viewed with pleasure the care-free look on the professor's face.

"Sakli ought to be here by now," exclaimed Harold ; "it is half an hour since we landed, and he said it would take him only twenty minutes to reach this place. I hope the old scow has not sprung a leak or stranded anywhere, as it is our chief hope now."

They waited another half-hour, and Harold be-

Dagh, and to know that you are enjoying your life with Ali Effendi, and that he has given you such a confidential position. It was very kind of him to give you the fifty pounds for me, but fortunately I am much better and do not need it. I judge from events that you are now at Besh Parmak, and believe you have some company. I do not know what change of plan this will make, but I hope that, if you cannot be of service to your new companions, you will at once go to the *hakin*¹ I told you of, for in passing through the plain you are sure to have contracted malaria. I know your courage and resourcefulness, and hope for the best.

"I learn that Achmet and his friends were much disappointed at not seeing you at Samsun Dagħ. They are to march from Aidin to-morrow to the rear of Besh Parmak, and hope to take you by surprise before morning. I am sure you will be pleased to see Achmet again, but if you are ill I adjure you by all the ties that bind us to set out at once for the *hakin's* house.

"Your brother,
"ABDUL."

Harold was deeply moved as he read the last lines of Ray's note. Edith was looking at him trying to

¹ Doctor.

see, as in a mirror, the reflection of his thoughts. Harold looked up and saw her interest. He went back to the top of the letter, and translated it as Ray intended it to be read.

" You see, Edith, that we were just in time. Had we not gone so far we should doubtless have heard the firing. Ali must have sent most of his men to search for us, and was caught napping. We have now little to fear from him. Perhaps he and the men on the ledge are now lying dead. With all his cleverness he did not give his foes credit for such forethought and skill.

" The Bulgarians have taught these Albanians some useful lessons. Yet some of Ali's band may be lurking in the plain. They are now desperate men, and will kill for very lust of blood. Ray is a true friend and brother. It would break his heart if I did not send him word soon, and next to securing your deliverance, Edith, my chief desire is to embrace him again."

Edith responded at once to Harold's thought—

" How I would like to meet him ; to see the friend and brother of one who has done so much for me."

She stopped abruptly, and turned to look at the high banks which were now receding lazily in the wake of the dugout.

"Mustapha, see that your rifle is ready," commanded Harold. "Ali and his band are either dead or dispersed, but some of them may be tearing along towards the sea for refuge. We have to go three miles to gain one, and they can easily outstrip us."

Harold did not add more, but he knew the wicked and reckless character of the baser Moslems; and he feared for Edith if he and Mustapha were surprised.

Mustapha, with Oriental obedience, had carried Ibrahim's rifle all the way from the outpost's position. This was now placed by the side of Sakli, and Harold gave him a few cartridges. He ordered him to pole as fast as he could for the mouth of the river. He hoped Ray or the peasant would have a boat waiting there for them; and he knew Mavromatis would provide for them as soon as they reached Tigani.

It was now eleven, and, although Sakli did his best to propel the boat along, yet the river was so deep at this point that the end of the pole barely touched the bottom. Harold used his hands to paddle at the sides, but this was of no avail. He asked Edith if she had any oil or butter in her package. The girl produced a small bottle of castor oil, and Harold greased his rifle well and used the stock as a paddle. The boat went much faster,

and Harold ordered Mustapha to do the same with his weapon. Edith now took the spare one, and oiled it herself, and she and her father took turns at paddling.

The old scow went speeding along. The river was fortunately wide, and Sakli used his pole only for steering. The reeds on the bank above rushed past, encouraging the rowers to redoubled efforts. The sun was beating down into the stream, and the paddlers were soon hot and perspiring. Harold took off his jacket and leather money-carrier, and with only his thin linen shirt on the upper part of his body, rowed with all his might. Mustapha, who always imitated his chief in everything, did the same, and so the work was kept up. Harold noticed that Edith was getting tired, and implored her to desist, saying they were making more than sufficient progress.

The river now became broader and shallower, and Sakli was able to double the speed of the boat. Harold had never paid much attention to this unlettered peasant before, but now as he faced him he saw what a fine countenance he had. A high forehead, regular features, and self-possessed look showed latent ability, courage and self-respect. Although he had half carried Edith through a

frightful journey, although he had not slept for several nights, yet he poled the boat along with skill and energy. At times he seemed to look for inspiration to Harold, whom he believed to be his educated and able countryman and fellow-believer ; or to Edith, whom he evidently regarded as a being of celestial origin.

Harold now looked at his watch and found that it was two o'clock : he asked Sakli where they were. The peasant answered that they were more than halfway to the sea, and that the swamp would end after another hour. The river soon broadened and became shallow, and Sakli asked his chief and Mustapha to rest while he poled them along.

“ But are you not tired ? ” asked Harold.

“ I am never tired when I am serving the English,” was the answer. “ They pay in gold for any work, and I am sure of my pay from you, and hope for a good present from them. I shall sleep for a week after I return to my home, and shall rest for a few months.”

Sakli poled the boat along. The river was now half a mile wide. The banks were low, and the occupants of the boat heard the “sugh-sugh” of the wild boars, which were disturbed in their rooting by the voices of the travellers. The huge lord of the harem

appeared on the bank, his shining tusks offering a tempting prize to the marksmen in the canoe. Harold had spent a week in this swamp many years before, and he did not get a single pig, while here was kingly spoil ; yet he had no wish to kill the splendid animal.

The dugout glided along, for Sakli, like Antaeus of old, seemed to gain new energy with each touch of mother-earth. At three o'clock the reeds disappeared, and a view of the surrounding country was disclosed. On the left was Miletus, with the great theatre marked out in white outline ; on the right were the bare mountains of Mycale ; but the bank was so high on this side that the plain could not be seen.

"Three hours more," ejaculated Sakli, "and we shall be at the mouth of the river. Let us row and paddle, and pole, that we may reach it before sunset ; for if we once get the English aboard some *kayiek*,¹ we shall be free from all care."

Harold and Mustapha set to work again, although their hands were terribly blistered. The bends of the river offered exasperating obstacles to their progress ; at one time they were discouraged as the river turned away from the sea, and seemed to be

¹ Boat or ship.

making for Aidin ; at another time their hearts were gladdened as it made a straight dash to the east. But patience and perseverance accomplished much, and as he neared the goal Sakli nerved himself to fresh efforts.

Just as the sun sank behind the distant mountains of Samos, the dugout floated into the green waters of the Aegean.

CHAPTER X

SAMOS AND SAFETY

HAROLD stood up in the boat and looked around. Sakli did likewise, but his keener eye and more active vigilance descried a fishing boat moored to the right shore. It required skilful navigation to bring the clumsy dugout around to the sail-boat, for the water was very deep, and the rifles were brought into use again. Sakli threw the pole away and took one of the paddles, and used it so dexterously that the old scow at last drew near to its larger mate.

They could now read the name of the ship—*Aghia Maria*¹—but they could see no sign of life upon it. The owner, if there, was evidently asleep, worn out perhaps with a long watch. The nose of the dugout finally touched the side of the smack, and Harold sprang aboard. At the same

¹ Saint Mary.

instant a man rose from the bottom, and asked in Greek who Harold was, and what he wanted. Harold replied that he was a friend, and bade the man pull up or cut loose his anchor at once. The boatman rubbed his eyes, but obeyed the sharp command. Harold then called to Sakli to pass up the English people. The peasant did so and in a few moments all were on board. The dug-out was then allowed to drift away, and having finished its career of usefulness, was left to the mercy of the Mediterranean, until some storm should cast it up upon a foreign coast, where it might provide firewood for some family.

The boatman had pulled up the anchor, and the smack was being blown slowly out to sea. The man seemed rather dazed, and Harold asked him in Greek if he had not been sent from Samos to wait for them. The man at once put his hand to the tiller to turn his boat around, saying that he was in the employ of some Turks who wanted to go to Budrum.

"If you wish to go to Samos you must find some other boat. I have been engaged to wait here six months, if necessary, for my passengers."

Harold saw that the man was in Ali's employ, and he resolved to bind him if he would not do as

told, and to navigate the boat himself to Tigani. But he spoke to the Greek—


“Ali has sent me here to take these captives to Tigani as they have paid their ransom, and you can then return for the chief. He had a battle with the troops this morning, and may need you in a day or two.”

At this moment a shot was fired from the shore, which was now some three hundred yards distant. Harold immediately called to Mustapha, and they seized the boatman and threw him into the hold. Harold bade his faithful ally keep him there, and then seized the tiller, and turned the boat so that its stern faced the shore.

“We have doubtless Ali or some of his band, who have rushed hither in hopes of escaping. Edith, you and your father must crouch in the bottom of the boat. Sakli, efface yourself. Keep silent, you dog of a Greek.”

These commands were delivered in the same breath in three different languages, for Harold was a true English Levantine, who uses several tongues in the most ordinary conversation.

Ali's late treasurer also crouched with his left arm still grasping the tiller. He peered over the stern and saw five men standing on the shore shout-



ing in Turkish to the boatman. Getting no response they raised their rifles and fired. Most of the bullets splashed in the water, but one of them glanced over the rudder, and neatly removed one of Harold's fingers. He at once changed hands on the tiller, and begged Edith to come and bind up his wound. Harold was afraid to raise the sail, as it would expose someone to the marksman he had trained, or possibly to Ali himself. He trusted to the land breeze to blow them slowly out to sea. The brigands were furious at seeing their fondest hope escaping them. They blasphemed and fired alternately, calling the boatman and the boat more names than could be imagined, and riddling the poor stern with holes. The boatman groaned as he heard the damage done to his property, but Mustapha promptly quelled his complaints. The boat increased the distance between itself and the shore, and the deepening gloom soon made it a dim object to the watchers on the shore. They stopped firing, and Harold turned round to raise the sail. He found that his left hand was a ball of white, and spoke to Edith, who was crouching still in the bottom of the craft.

"Thank you," he said; "I had quite forgotten my wound. We have escaped. This dangerous

mountain and plain are behind us. Providence has enabled us to surmount our difficulties in the very nick of time."

Harold then told Sakli how to raise the sail, and went back to the rudder. His left hand was numb, for Edith had bound the cloths, obtained perhaps at personal sacrifice, very tightly. The flow of blood was arrested, and Harold's right hand was strong. He was in a heaven of joy and relief. He begged Edith and her father to come and sit on the seat beneath the raised stern.

"This boat," he exclaimed, "has proved an unforeseen means of escape; it will be a strange thing if we are not soon in civilized regions. The boatman is unfortunately too much of an alien to aid us, but I feel quite at home on the sea, and know these waters sufficiently well to navigate our craft to Scala Nora or Tigani before noon. Lie down and sleep if you can, and be henceforth relieved from all sense of danger. Ali and his band are only to be feared on the land, while we are now safe on the sea."

Edith was too dazed and weary to respond. She seemed to have been in a dream since she had been lifted on to the fishing boat. She had heard Harold's swift commands, and when the

bleeding stump had been stretched out to her, she had bound it up as best she could. Some drops of blood had spurted out on her blouse, but she was unconscious of them. Her father seemed equally bewildered. They were so accustomed to obey Harold's orders, however, that they went and sat in the bottom of the boat, and reclined against the side.

Harold took his bearings. In the twilight the promontory of Mycale was dimly defined, and a haze showed where Samos lay. There was but little wind, and the sail flapped lazily. The boat was now about a mile from the shore. Two huge oars lay at the sides of the smack, and Harold bade Sakli take one of these and row. He managed it so badly that he was soon recalled. Harold remembered his superhuman efforts of the previous days, and bade him lie down.

Harold now ordered Mustapha to unbind the Greek, and bring him to the stern.

"You ignorant fellow," he addressed him, "would you rather aid a brigand to escape than some English people?"

The man replied surlily—

"Ali pays well, and it is dangerous for any one to disobey him. He offered me ten pounds a

month to wait here, and I knew I would get it. His nephew Selim engaged me long ago, and I have already been here a week. How can I earn money more easily than by sitting in my boat doing nothing ? ”

Harold had no answer to this question, but he made up his mind to pay the man well.

“ You will receive ten pounds on our arrival at Tigani ; and you may consider yourself lucky to have fallen into such generous hands. Ali will never trouble you, because he is now dead or flying for his life. As for his men, they do not know you well, and you can easily change your sphere of operations for a few months. Take an oar now and row. Mustapha, draw your knife, and if he lags for a moment stab him, and throw his body into the water.”

Harold now remembered his promise to Sakli. He called him to the stern, and bade him hold the rudder for a moment. He then thrust his right hand into his bosom, and counted out twenty pounds.

He handed the money to Sakli—

“ I had promised you twenty pounds when we were at the mouth of the river. Here they are. When we get to Samos you will receive thirty more.

If you are afraid to return to the plain at present, I will get you work at Smyrna."

Sakli wrapped the golden fortune into a corner of his turban, and said he would return to Spielya in a kayiek, and was not afraid to go back to the plain. He would stop in Sokia for the winter, and had no terror of brigands. He then went to the bow of the boat, and was soon asleep.

Harold next ordered Mustapha to roll him a cigarette. As there was no wind for the moment, he let go the tiller and lighted the welcome weed. He surveyed his craft by the flame of the match. The boatman was rowing with one of the huge oars, and Mustapha was sitting beside him, with his sword-like knife in his hand. In the bottom of the smack, Edith and her father were reclining on some huge rocks that were used for ballast. They were either dozing or sleeping, and seemed to be comfortable. On the bow of the boat was the recumbent form of Sakli.

The match went out, and Harold looked behind him. The shore was out of sight, and the five fingers of the huge mountain he had so recently left could just be distinguished on the horizon. Harold painfully shifted the sail to the left, as the land breeze was increasing. He pulled the tiller in the same

direction, and the boat was soon scudding along the shore. As he inhaled the soothing puffs of his cigarette, he murmured—

“Thank Providence that all has gone so well. Another night, and our flight will be a memory of the past!”

The breeze freshened after a few moments, and Harold told the boatman to stop rowing and take in his oar.

Although Harold had been much on the sea, he felt scarcely at home in this lumbering craft. He determined to hug the shore until daylight, and then make straight for the island. He knew there were sudden squalls in the open sea, and he had no wish to be blown out of his course, and be forced to land on some other island where he had no friends. Fortunately the wind remained a light land-breeze, which enabled him to keep his craft parallel to the borders of the gulf, so that he could make fair progress without disturbing the sleepers.

Harold now thought of Edith and her father, and wondered if the Greek had any blankets or extra sails which his friends might use for coverings. He spoke to the man, who was sitting at his feet, and asked him if he had these articles. The boatman

replied that he had nothing but the sails then in use, but Harold did not believe him. He called to Sakli to search the forward compartment, and the peasant produced a jug of water, a quantity of bread, cheese and olives, some coffee, some old clothes and a ragged blue blanket. Harold then told the peasant to search the after compartment. The Greek moved unwillingly aside, and Sakli drew forth a large bundle of sail-cloth and a bottle of mastic. He told his master that there were also some ropes and fishing lines inside ; but as they would be of no use they were allowed to stay there.

The food was now divided. Harold called to Edith, and asked her if she was hungry. She replied that she was very thirsty, and could eat some bread, so Sakli was ordered to give her the jug. The gourd had been brought from the dugout, and it now made a drinking cup. Edith and her father had a good drink, and ate some of the bread and cheese. She opened a tin of potted meat which she had brought in her precious parcel, and she spread some of it on her bread, and gave the tin to her father ; she then motioned Sakli to pass it to Harold. Soon all in the craft were fed, for the peasant and Mustapha had been given liberal

allowances, and even the boatman had been permitted to eat some of his own food.

Harold drank some of the mastic, and found it very invigorating. He was glad of the stimulant, for he was beginning to feel the reaction from his sleepless nights and violent exertions. He told Sakli to place the clothes and ragged blanket on the rocks, and to tie the sail-cloth to the bottom of the mast and the bow, so as to make a tent for "the English."

He begged Edith and her father to go beneath it and sleep, as they were now quite out of danger, and must begin to recuperate their strength. Edith thanked Harold for his never-failing thoughtfulness and consideration, and promised to rest.

Harold now had both mind and body at ease for the moment. The food and the stimulant had made him forget his wound and his weariness; and for the first time in his life he gave himself up to serious thought. As he moved the tiller to right or left, he looked over his past life, and projected his thought ahead.

"I am young, well educated and independent. What does life in the Levant offer me? An easy, humdrum existence with no future. Shall I go to England and take up some profession, or to America

and take up politics? England is too conservative. It would be many decades before I could make a name. America offers limitless opportunities for the bold and the pushing. In business there is the exhilaration of keen rivalry and competition. In politics there is the opportunity to rise to the top. The Americans are witty and delightful, good companions and encouraging associates. But what is it that marks a void in all these contemplations? It is Edith. I could not be happy anywhere without her.

“And what impression can I have made upon her imagination? She was surprised when I first spoke to her in English. She was astonished when I first declared my name and nations. She has been gracious since I helped her to escape. But can any feelings of love have been awakened in her for the barbarously clad, and unkempt brigand who has been her companion! She is naturally grateful to me for my services, but she is also grateful to Sakli and to Mustapha. Though I love and admire her exceedingly, yet I would never presume on my past services to influence her affection. When I can bathe and dress as a gentleman, then I will speak to her as to an equal. If after a few days she seems anxious not to part,

then I will let her know my feelings. If she changes and is effusively polite and grateful, I will let her go back to England without letting her know my love."

Harold now thought of Ali.

"Poor chap! yesterday a monarch in his mountain, to-night dead or fleeing for his life! perhaps lying cold and stiff, with his victors singing their wild songs over him, or else a fugitive in hill or plain, wondering where he may lay his head. He certainly treated me well. He received me into his band cordially. He gave me the highest post in his power. He revealed his inmost soul to me in whispered confidence. He told me to send fifty pounds to my sick friend. He placed me in guard of his prisoners. From first to last he treated me with respect and truest friendship. See his kindness to the poor at Samsun Dag. See his regret at the shameful rôle he was forced to play at the instigation of Farkouh Pasha. See his courage and energy, his piety and dignity, his swift and remorseless vengeance, his admiration for true manliness as shown in the Vali Pasha and in his English friends at Bournabat. Surely Ali was a MAN, although simple and mistaken; and when he is called to the bar of judgment, his sentence must be far lighter

than that of many a Christian who has sinned wilfully."

Harold now called Sakli and asked him to roll a great number of cigarettes, as he was wounded, and moreover could not let go the rudder. He ordered the peasant to light a splinter from the planking, and after he had set fire to his cigarette, Harold surveyed his craft anew.

The Greek and Mustapha were seated at his feet. The flame was reflected from Mustapha's knife, which the faithful brigand still grasped firmly. The sail was bellied out under the increasing breeze. Beneath was the sail-cloth tent, which covered the middle of the ship. Harold could not see beneath it, but he guessed that his friends were sleeping.

The splinter was extinguished, and Harold bade Sakli hand his tobacco-box to Mustapha and the Greek in turn, and then to roll a cigarette for himself. His own light was then passed to each in turn, and after a moment four points of glow marked the respective positions of the silent smokers.

The wind increased, and Harold found that it would bring him too far on his course before day-break. He therefore had Sakli shift the sail to the right, and tacked for the open sea. After an hour's

run he tacked back again, arriving at almost the same place. He looked at his watch by the glow of his weed, which, like the widow's cruse, was always being replenished. He found that it was two o'clock. The promontory of Mycale was still some distance ahead, so he determined to run for it; for he wanted to make for Samos as soon as the light of dawn revealed its position.

Harold called Sakli, who was now quite rested, and ordered him to relieve Mustapha, who was directed to lie down and sleep. The peasant produced an equally formidable knife, and sat by the Greek.

Our knight-errant, who had passed through more of adventure than he really desired, now spent the time in guiding his boat.

As the first flush of day mantled the sky, the stars with supreme modesty began to efface themselves. Harold looked at his right, and saw that the beneficent breeze had brought them abreast of the promontory. He called the Greek, and said to him—

“It is now daylight and I can see the course. I am wounded and tired. Take charge of the boat, and make straight for Tigani. If you bring us there by noon your hire shall be increased to fifteen

pounds. If you try to mislead me you will find a watery grave."

The Greek looked at Harold a moment, and then seized the rudder. He shifted the sail and made for the open sea."

"I shall get a stiffer breeze there," he said, "and we will be at Tigani in three hours."

Harold told Sakli to sit by the Greek, and he went forward to speak with Edith. She was awake, and smiled as Harold peered beneath the sail-cloth.

"We are getting on finely," he assured her. "We are now sailing direct for Tigani, and the boatman tells us that we ought to reach the place within three hours."

Edith was delighted to hear this good news.

"But are you not tired to death?" she asked. "You have kept charge of the boat all through the night in spite of your wound, and yesterday and the night before you worked like a slave."

"I am rather done up," Harold replied; "but my strength simply *must* hold out until I see you safe in the house of Ray's friend. Then I shall rest and have my hand attended to. It is a prospect that is pleasant to contemplate, especially to have a good bath, and to know that henceforth one can

dress like a gentleman. But you must wish to make your toilet, and so I shall transform this tent into a screen so that you may fix yourself for the day."

Harold called Mustapha, and between them they tied the middle of the sail to the mast, and made fast the ends to the oar pegs. They then withdrew to the rear. Edith was deeply moved at this new evidence of delicacy and devotion, in Harold, who, although doubtless suffering from his wound and his fatigue, had thus thought of her necessary comfort and privacy.

Harold told Sakli to get the provisions together, and to try and make some coffee. This was a difficult task but the peasant proved equal to it. He found an old tin which was used as a bailer, and washed it well in the sea. He then cut off some splinters from the seat and laid them on a flat stone ; he put two smaller stones at the sides to rest the tin on, and lit the sticks. After a long time the water boiled, and Harold put a handful of coffee into the tin. He poured a generous share into the gourd, and handed it to Professor Lovejoy. The latter drank it with avidity, almost scalding his throat in the operation. Edith now appeared and received her share. A little was left in the tin and Harold

offered it to Mustapha, but he would not accept it, and so his chief drank it, and felt much warmed and invigorated. A slight repast of bread and cheese now followed ; and then all eyes were turned on Tigani, which was plainly to be seen at the base of the island.

“ If only this wind keeps up we shall soon be in comfort,” thought Harold. “ Edith and her father are brave, but they cannot stand much more of this discomfort. I too feel weak and depressed, but I must keep my limbs and faculties under full control until I can meet Mavromatis. Three days and two nights without proper food or rest play the devil with a man’s nerves and muscles.”

Harold looked at the Greek. He was evidently doing his best to reach port, and get rid of his unwelcome guests. He kept his eye on the sail, the sea, and the town, and tacked frequently so as to make all possible headway.

When in the middle of the strait the wind began to blow violently, and soon the boat was leaping from wave to wave, sometimes dashing its nose into the brine and sending a shower of spray over its occupants.

Harold bade Edith and her father come to the rear, and sent his two allies to the bow. He then

put the sail-cloth over his friends' knees, and bade them draw it up to their chins. He went himself to the centre of the boat and leaned against the mast.

The craft tore along : now pointing direct for the town ; now beating up into the teeth of the wind, to get a higher position for another run. The Greek certainly handled the boat well, and the mainland disappeared farther and farther into the rear.

Harold glanced at Edith and her father. The latter was very white, and it was evident that he would soon be deadly sick. Edith managed to find a bottle of smelling salts, and these revived her parent.

When at about an hour's run from the island the wind suddenly dropped, and the sail flapped uselessly. The sea was still rough, and the boat rolled and pitched in a most uncomfortable way. The boatman at last furled the sail, muttering some blasphemies between his teeth, and took one of the oars. It seemed folly to think of rowing the huge craft over such a distance, but Harold was relieved to see some effort being made to reach the shore. He went to the stern and sat down by Edith.

"This at least is much better than being in Ali's camp, or hiding in the marsh," he urged, soothingly. "We are in the sight of our destination, and if only the wind springs up again we can soon land. The waves are subsiding, too, and you will be comfortable in a few minutes."

Edith smiled wanly and replied—

"Do not think of us. You have already accomplished wonders, and it is not your fault that we are becalmed. We are only a little uncomfortable now, not dead or exhausted as we would have been were it not for you."

Harold stood up and looked here and there on the sea, trying to catch a glimpse of some ruffled patch of water which showed the influence of a breeze. He saw one at last, and told the boatman to row to it, but when the boat reached the spot the sea was again glassy. Harold gave up in despair, and reclined on the stern.

"How exasperating!" he muttered. "Only a mile or two from the land, and we lying here sweating and fuming! How long it will take the Greek to row this ungainly craft to the town God only knows. I could probably swim to the shore in half the time if I was stronger. Well, I suppose it will do no good to grumble."

Harold's collapsed state was easily shown by his words. He had no desire to smoke, but lay at full length on the raised platform near the rudder.

An hour passed. Meanwhile the boatman's regular sweep had been doing some good, for when Harold again stood up he could see the houses of Tigani distinctly. He sprang to the middle of the boat, and fitted the other oar to the wooden peg. His long practice at rowing now served him in good stead, for he could balance the shaft, and, although wounded and exhausted, whatever force he put into the task proved efficacious. Inch by inch they drew near to the port.

When halfway over the remaining space a gust of wind caught the boat, and the Greek immediately raised the sail. Harold sank down near the stern. He told Mustapha to drop the rifles and cartridge-belts over the side, and asked Edith to undo his. He then fixed his eyes on the landing, and saw a couple of Samian soldiers, strolling back and forth, clad in their blue jackets and white kilts. A man dressed in European clothes walked out of a house on the quay as the boat drew up to the landing, and came at once to the side. He looked at Harold for a moment and glanced at the English people in the hold. He then addressed the former—

"Are you Mr. Ray's friend?"

"I am," Harold replied. "Are you Mavromatis?"

"Yes," he answered.

Harold shook the man's hand with all of his remaining strength. He then turned around and exclaimed—

"Thank God, Edith, we are at last in port, and your troubles are over."

CHAPTER XI

LOVE AND JOY AFTER DANGER

MAVROMATIS said that he had engaged a house on the quay where they could go at once. He saw that Harold was wounded, and while he was assisting his guests to land he called a servant, and ordered him to ride over the hill to Vathy, and bring the French doctor. He then explained the case to the Samian soldiers, who had come to investigate, and on Harold's direction gave the boatman fifteen pounds, and told Sakli and Mustapha to follow them.

The weary voyagers were soon resting in Mavromatis' parlour. Their host ordered tea to be served to the older man and the girl, while he turned to Harold, who was his chief care. He poured whisky into a tumbler until it was half full, and filled the glass with soda-water.

"I can see by your face that you are on the verge of a break-down. Drink this and it will revive you.

Your hot bath is ready, and after it you must go straight to bed. The doctor will attend to your wound while you are resting. I shall wire to Mr. Ray at once, and to-morrow we can discuss plans for the future."

A lady now appeared and took Edith to her room, and Professor Lovejoy was given an adjoining apartment. Harold told Mavromatis to treat the Turks well, and then allowed himself to be led to his room, where a huge bath-tub stood steaming in the middle of the chamber. Mavromatis helped him disrobe and bath, and the delicious hot water, of which he had almost forgotten the feeling, soothed his nerves and took the cramp out of his muscles. He then put on a suit of pajamas, and rolled into the sweet and soft bed which invited him with open sheets. He was fast asleep before Mavromatis could draw down the mosquito net.

Harold did not awake until noon the next day, having slept twenty-six hours at a stretch. The light filtered into the room through the closed shutters, and he lay awake a few moments trying to make out where he was. He looked at his left hand, which felt very strange, and found that his third finger was missing. Some one had evidently been treating it, for the stump was enclosed in a

leather shield, and this was bound by straps to his wrist. A strong odour of iodoform came from the dressing, and Harold tried to recall where he had suffered this injury. His mind gradually resumed its functions, and he drew aside the mosquito net and sprang out of bed.

A fresh tub of water had been placed in the corner where his former costume had been kicked the previous day, and a familiar suit of flannel lay neatly folded on the sofa. His watch and a heavy purse lay on the dressing-table, and beside these were shaving utensils. Harold shaved, bathed, and dressed, and then went to the mirror to comb his hair, but found only a straight upright set of bristles.

He stamped on the floor. Mavromatis appeared, and could hardly identify this spruce fashionably clad youth with the tired travel-stained Moslem of the previous day.

"Congratulations," he exclaimed, "that you are well and strong after your fearful experiences. The doctor says that your hand will soon be all right, as only two joints of the finger were removed. I telegraphed to Mr. Ray yesterday, and here is a letter for you, which he sent by his steam launch, with some packages ; but come down and have something to eat first."

Harold cast a look at the mirror, and inwardly deplored that one's hair might not grow to proper length in a night, since it was said to be able to turn white in the same period. He then followed Mavromatis downstairs, and stepped into the dining-room.

Edith and her father had finished breakfast, and were sitting by the window looking out upon the quay. They both came at once to meet Harold. Professor Lovejoy seized his hand, and expressed his deepest thanks to his deliverer. Edith put out her hand which Harold took respectfully.

"I will not try to thank you," she murmured in a low voice, "for I am unable to find words to express my appreciation of your devotion, your delicacy, and your great services. You have been a true knight. But you must be hungry. Let me pour your tea, and we can converse while you are eating."

She led the way to the table, and Harold saw with delight that her step was springy, and that she seemed none the worse for the journey. She had on a simple close-fitting costume which Mavromatis had brought from Vathy, and she looked extremely nice.

Edith chatted gaily while Harold ate, and she refilled his cup many times, which he emptied without

noticing the number. Their host evidently had some knowledge of English tastes, for bacon and eggs, fried potatoes, marmalade and toast were served in abundance. Professor Lovejoy had taken a seat at the end of the table, and was marvelling at the change effected in his deliverer. The scholar had retained his clerical costume, but it was now quite presentable owing doubtless to Edith's care.

Harold thought of Ray's message, and asked his companions' permission to read it. They of course agreed, and he then read the letter aloud—

“MY DEAR HAROLD,—

“I am no longer forced to keep up the farce about a sick friend. I was certain that you would escape all right ; but when I learned of Ali's last venture, and his capture of the Lovejoys, I was much alarmed. I was sure that you would not leave them in the lurch, and indeed I did not wish to have you do so ; but I could scarcely hope that you would get yourself and them away safely. Thank God you have been able to do so, my brave friend !

“I would have come to see you at once but am detained. I send you by my launch five hundred pounds in gold, which you may need ; some extra clothing ; and the baggage of the Lovejoys, which

I obtained from Sokia and from their hotel here. Perhaps you had all better go to Europe or England for a time, as things are in a very disturbed state here. The English fleet is in the harbour, and has seized the Konak and Custom-house. I have notified the British Consul of your friends' safety ; but the English will probably remain here for some time. Take my launch, and go round to Vathy, where you will be more comfortable. As you will probably remain in Samos for a few days' rest, I will try and run over before you leave.

" Give my compliments to the Lovejoys, and bid them command me if I can serve them in any way.

" With increased love,

" Your friend and brother,

" RAY."

" We must certainly wait in Samos until your friend can come," exclaimed Edith. " I long to meet this noble man, and to thank him for his kindness."

Harold was pleased to know that Edith was in no hurry to separate from him, and he hoped that his fate would be decided before Ray came. Edith seemed the same as on the journey, and he regarded this as a good augury.

The bag of gold and the Lovejoys' trunks were now

brought from the launch, and Harold asked his host to call in Mustapha and Sakli.

They looked around the room on entering expecting to see Mehmet. Their eyes rested on Harold, and his features seemed familiar, but they did not speak.

"Don't you know me?" asked their former leader. "I am Mehmet, although now clothed in English dress. Mehmet promised you fortunes in gold, and here they are."

Harold poured the contents of the bag upon the table, and then counted out thirty pounds and handed it to Sakli. The bold peasant received this extra guerdon with a deep salaam, and added it to the store in his turban. Harold then counted out two hundred pounds, and gave it to Mustapha, saying—

"My good friend, I give you my share as well as your own. If you wish to return to the Sokia plain stop at Ray's office in Smyrna, and you shall receive the deed of any vineyard you may desire. If you wish to remain in my service, you shall receive five pounds a month as long as you live."

Mustapha took the heavy pile of gold into his hands, and while fumbling it mechanically thought—

"Was this brave and clever young Cretan only a

giaour, who had introduced himself into Ali's band to learn his secrets, and betray him ? ”

He looked at Harold's frank and true face, and his power of reasoning failed him. At any rate this giaour was a good angel, for he had carried him through many dangers, and had made him safe and rich. He looked at the gold, and wondered if it could really be all his own. Even Ali, the Croesus, had never entrusted him with so much money. He thought of the Meander plain ; of the three wives he might marry to help him in his vineyard ; but he said nothing.

Harold read his thoughts and decided for him—

“ Go back to Smyrna in the launch. I will give the captain a letter to his employer. Leave your gold at the office. Go to the plain and pick out a vineyard. Marry a wife, and settle down to home comforts.”

Mustapha's face brightened. He salaamed, and said—

“ Do not tell me who you are, Mehmet. You have given me a foretaste of paradise, and so you must be a good angel. I shall take your advice and go to the plain. If you need me again send Sakli for me, and I will come to you, even to heathen England.”

Edith and her father had come out of their rooms when they heard Harold speaking Turkish, and they had been interested spectators of the scene. Although they could not understand the language, yet they could see by the actions of the man what Harold had said.

Edith now expressed a wish to give some present to the two men. She therefore took two twenty-pound notes from her bosom, and asked Harold to give the men the equivalent in gold. Her knight did so and handed the men this additional treasure. Sakli's turban was full, so he put the twenty pounds in his girdle. Mustapha was quite overwhelmed with the flood of gold, and Harold at last suggested that he empty his tobacco-box into his handkerchief and put his treasure there. The two Moslems then asked permission to kiss Edith's hand, and afterwards withdrew. Harold walked with them to the quay, where Sakli went to a coffee house, saying that he would wait for a kayiek. Harold took Mustapha to the launch, and told the captain to get up steam, as they would leave for Vathy within an hour's time.

This interval was passed in inspecting their baggage. The English party then boarded the launch. Edith and her father had donned new garments, and

looked like wealthy tourists. Harold was dressed in a white duck suit, and had a yachting cap on his head. The Samian guards who were standing on the pier wondered where these smart Europeans had come from, as they had never seen them before.

Harold placed Edith and her father under a canopy at the stern. Wide wicker chairs made comfortable seats, and as Harold and the professor smoked the excellent Samian cigarettes, they all luxuriated in their present comfort. It seemed years since they had toiled painfully into the harbour, dirty, hungry, weary unto death; their pilot a Greek in the employ of their late gaoler; their conveyance an uncomfortable, ungovernable craft which was at the mercy of the winds. Now they were seated in American chairs, clad in clean English garments, on a fast English steamer. Whether the wind blew or not was of no moment, they would reach Vathy at precisely seven in the evening.

The launch headed up the strait. Mycale was on the left; the deadly Meander plain was almost lost to view.

Professor Lovejoy had regained all his former enthusiasm and pedantry.

"Over twenty-three centuries ago," he said,

"a great battle was fought in this strait. The cowardly Xerxes had fled from Salamis, leaving his army and navy to do what they could against the bold and clever Greeks. A year after and the last of the Persian ships were sunk in this strait, on the same day that the army of Macedonians were exterminated at Platea. What a wonderful race were the Greeks! With god-like ability and bravery, and with Satanic treachery and selfishness. See Miltiades, Themistocles, Alcibiades. Who was it worked the ruin of Leonidas at Thermopylae? Ephialtes."

And so the savant went on citing examples from every Greek city-state, to prove this or that theory.

Although Harold was interested in the learned professor's talk, his eye kept wandering to Edith. She seemed so sweet, so pure, so attractive, that her father's observations obtained but little of his attention. Had Harold been alone with the professor he would have been entranced, as it was he was bored.

Edith was intelligent enough to guess the drift of emotions. She coloured slightly as she became aware of Harold's thoughts. But she turned to him, and asked his advice regarding their future plans.

"My father can do nothing more at present in his special study," she observed. "Should we not therefore go to Athens, where he can always find antiquities to pore over? We visited the Museum when we were there, and it would take months to do it justice. You doubtless remember the bronze masterpieces just recovered from the sea, and the trophies from Troy and Knossos. Or should we go to your former home, Crete?" she questioned with an arch smile. "You can be our guide there, and will take us to all the points of interest."

Harold smiled at this sally, and replied that he knew Crete, and Greece, and Abyssinia equally well; but that he would not feel absolved from all responsibility until he saw them safely in their home at Reading. He reminded Edith that there had been brigands in Greece, Italy and even in England; and told her that these men might be resurrected at any moment.

Underneath all this banter there was an under-current of emotion, which both of them understood; and while the professor addressed the waves like Demosthenes of old, the two young people prepared the way for closer intimacy. Each saw enough in the other to cement a tie that would be lasting.

Harold now turned to the professor, who was still

speaking. He at last aroused him from his abstraction, and asked a deck hand if he had ever heard the word "tea." The man replied by going to the deck-house, and bringing a table with cups and saucers upon it. Edith presided at the board, and poured out the tea from a silver pot, which Ray had thoughtfully provided.

"Your friend Ray must be a wonderful man," she observed. "From the instant we reached the landing-place at Tigani we have felt his beneficent influence. I am quite in love with him, although I have never seen him."

Harold hastened to tell his friend that Ray was considerably older than her father, and that a marriage with him was quite out of the question. They laughed and joked until the launch rounded the cape, and Vathy was revealed on the left. It was really a beautiful place. The harbour formed a great amphitheatre, with the houses on the quay as a grand-stand ; above these on all sides rose the high-terraced mountains, and one could imagine giants seated on them, watching naval combats in the bay.

Two large steamboats—the French Messageries and the Austrian Lloyds—lay at anchor, and numerous kayieks were moored at the shore.

The launch made its way direct to the landing-place, and the English people saw some Samian soldiers walking on the quay. A European came out of the first house on the water front, and walked to the side of the launch. It was Mavromatis, who had ridden over the divide from Tigani that he might welcome his guests when they landed.

Harold almost danced as he took Edith's arm and walked to Mavromatis' house. The girl tried to appear scandalized, but failed in the attempt, and only laughed. The natives of the city merely stared at these mad Americans or English. They had seen the species before, and acknowledged their perfect right to walk on their hands if they saw fit.

The youth was delighted with the comradeship of Edith, and pressed her arm as they danced along. He was more American than English, and so was more demonstrative. Edith was naturally reserved, but she could well understand how an energetic young man must feel to be again on friendly shores, and free from restraint, after having endured weeks of trying responsibility and danger. Her frank English nature may have wished to respond to this buoyant display, but the repressing nature of maidenhood enabled her to restrain any such inclination. Her silent pressure on his arm showed

Harold her sympathy and feeling. It sobered him, too, as his thoughts took deeper reflection.

Mavromatis was evidently a prince in Samos, for he had a palace on the quay. His face shone with pleasure as he opened the door into the drawing-room, and motioned his guests to enter. His wife was sitting there and she rose and kissed Edith on both cheeks; she bowed to Professor Lovejoy and shook hands with Harold, saying that she was more than delighted to welcome Mr. Ray's friend.

Sweet drinks were served to Edith and her father, and a whisky and soda was prepared for Harold. Mavromatis then produced some of the "Régie première" cigarettes. While Mme. Mavromatis was speaking with the Lovejoys—for she knew English perfectly—Harold asked his host for paper and pen, and wrote the following note to Ray—

"DEAR OLD MAN,—

"You have evidently been a guardian angel during the past weeks, for behold me now in the hands of Mavromatis, dressed like a Christian, with my helpers paid, and with my friends lodged like princes! My dear brother, you know my gratitude and love. Come here as soon as you can, and let me embrace you. Come and meet my friends, who

have declared that they will not leave Vathy until they have seen you. Come and see *Edith Lovejoy*, and her father, who is as clever a man as lives.

"Your captain will bring you a Moslem, Mustapha. I have given him a large sum which you will please take care of. Kindly get him a small estate in the Meander plain, and have your men keep track of him, for he is a white man.

"Sakli preferred to return by kayiek. We gave him seventy pounds, but if you can put him in the way of gaining more, please do so, for he has proved a lion in strength and a dog in fidelity. We will have dinner—a good meal—on the Vathy quay to-morrow night at nine o'clock. At eight sharp I shall come to the landing-place, to take you to my room, where you can bathe and dress. Plan to stay with us a week at least. Ask one of the Whites or Paysons to look after your business. They are all right, and will gladly do it.

"Your brother,

"HAROLD."

Harold and Mavromatis walked to the launch, and the former gave the letter to the captain, and told him to deliver it and Mustapha into his employer's hands. The captain immediately rang the bell in

the engine-room, and the launch started on its eight hours' voyage to Smyrna.

They now returned to the house, and sat in the drawing-room for a time, enjoying the comfort.

"I hope that Mr. Ray can join us soon," remarked Mme. Mavromatis.

"He will be here at eight to-morrow night," replied Harold.

"How charming!" observed the hostess. "If you can all only stay here a month we shall get to know each other well."

"We shall be very glad to accept your hospitality for a few days, and we thank you sincerely for your cordial reception," replied Edith.

"Your trunks are now in your rooms," said Mavromatis, "and you may wish to rest before dinner."

All withdrew to their apartments. The kind family had given up the front rooms to their guests, and the English people found a fine breeze blowing into their balconies, and a wonderful view of the bay to rest their eyes upon.

The principal meal of the day was served in the garden, in the courtyard at the back of the palace. Edith and her hostess had put on some flimsy, ethereal costumes that were very becoming. Mr.

Lovejoy still held to his professional garb, while Harold and Mavromatis were clad in flannels. Mastic and whisky were served first. Then a collection of appetisers were placed on the table—caviare, olives, preserved fish, and cheese. A fine puree soup followed, then sole just caught in the bay. A small fillet of beef formed the *pièce de résistance*, and an equally delightful dish followed—roast partridge (the birds had been shot several days before in the mountains above). An English plum-pudding now appeared, with blue brandy lights illumining it, and sweet Samian wines were brought into play to wash it down. Frozen pudding with macaroons followed, and black coffee, with cognac for those that desired it, closed the meal. The “ Régie première ” cigarettes were now lighted, and while the ladies ate Parisian bonbons the men smoked.

The garden was lighted with Chinese lanterns, with groves of oleander, which grew here like trees, for the background.

Mavromatis now poured out the liqueurs—Benedictine, Chartreuse, and Crème de Menthe—into the thimble-like glasses, and handed them to Harold and the professor.

“ It gives me genuine pleasure thus to welcome

you all to my home," their host began. " I admire Mr. Ray above all men, and open my heart to his friends as to him. He has sent me some twenty telegrams about you, Mr. Harold, and for the past four days I have waited at Tigani in hopes of being of service to you.

" You may wonder why I so admire him, Mr. Harold, and I am proud to tell you why.

" Thirty years ago I was an ignorant boy in Smyrna, doing errands at Costi's and blacking shoes. Mr. Ray used to go there every noon for his mastic. He became interested in me, and took me to his office. He ordered one of his clerks to teach me English and as, perhaps, I was intelligent he gave me higher employment. He then sent me into the interior to buy figs and raisins ; and he was so pleased with my fidelity and energy that he sent me to England to spend a few years at a commercial college. When I returned he made me his agent at Samos, and has since advanced me so that I have prospered far above the average lot of my race.

" And yet no thanks will he ever receive. He tells me bluntly that it is only for his own advantage that he employs me. But that is the way with you English people, you seem to be ashamed of doing good, yet you are always doing it ! Well, Mr.

Ray is one of God's chosen, and I am probably only one of a hundred that he has thus helped."

Harold alone could appreciate this story. Ray was cold and distant by nature, yet he had a warm heart which had never found vent for its tenderness towards wife or children, and so had spent its energy upon the poor and friendless.

"Wait until Ray comes," exclaimed Harold, "and we will tear the mask from his face, and show what a noble monster he is!"

CHAPTER XII

THE BETROTHAL—AND RAY

HAROLD now asked Edith to get a wrap, and go for a walk with him on the quay. She had become so accustomed to obey him that she followed his directions involuntarily.

“ I am perhaps better acquainted with America than with England,” he said as he took Edith’s arm. “ But in the former country all young people, who are at all friendly, look forward to the evening walks, when they may stroll with light hearts, and talk as much as they wish. Now I have never had an opportunity to talk with you privately as an equal, and I want to know more about your life and your friends. I suppose that I am an Englishman, since I pay five shillings each year for registration at the Smyrna Consulate. But I am also American and Turk, and I know not what else. You are a veritable Briton, are you not ? ”

“ I am not so sure of that,” Edith replied laugh-

ingly, for she was relieved at Harold's bantering tone; she had feared that this energetic young Anglo-American might have hurried her off to a Greek church, and married her before she had time to expostulate—or consent. "My mother was Scotch, and my paternal grandmother was French; but I do not think that any of my ancestors were Turks. I feel like an English girl; but I would like to visit America, and find out what graces I could graft on the English mother-brand."

Harold laughed at this reply, and went on—

"What a delightful mixture it would make, if we could combine the marvellous strenuousness of the American with the stubbornness of the Briton, add to this the canniness of the Scotch and the happy-go-luckiness of the Irish, put in a little of the Gaelic exuberance, and temper it with the phlegmatic nature of the Teuton! Then we might add the romantic nature of Don Quixote's race to the fatalism of the Moslem, and wind up with the mysticism of the Hindoo."

"But would you be willing to live with such a combined nature?" asked Edith. "Unless you could, perhaps, try each in turn, you would be battered from pillar to post, and would doubtless end in an asylum."

“ You are right,” laughed Harold. “ Providence is perhaps wiser than we. Let us try to see the good in each race, and let us hope that they will reciprocate the courtesy.

“ Well, Edith, we are on free shores at last,” he went on, as he took seats with his companion on the quay at Vathy beneath a gas-lamp, and ordered ices. “ The dusky brigand Mehmet has metamorphosed into the Christian Harold. We are both about to make plans for the future. You came to this country as a guardian angel to your father; you will go back with him to England in a few weeks. I was born here, and, until a week ago, expected to end my days here in an easy, lifeless existence. My late experiences have changed my purpose. I have met Ali Effendi. I have met you, and I am now resolved to make my life count for something in the world. Until I met you I was heart-free. No woman had ever exacted from me more than a respectful deference. I do not speak of any past services, for they would have been rendered with equal alacrity to any people in distress.

“ I will not beat about the bush, but come straight to the question. Edith, I love you with all my heart. I respect you for qualities which I revere in the memory of my mother. I admire you for traits of

character higher than my own. Can you love me? Can you consent to be my wife? Answer frankly as woman to man."

Edith had bowed her head when the declaration began, but she raised it when Harold had finished. She put her hand in his and said simply—

"I do love you, dear."

Harold kissed the hand which rested in his, and did not speak for some moments; his lips rested on the warm flesh as he tried to realize what joy this answer meant. Then he raised his eyes to Edith's, and by the lamp which shone in front, each read in the windows of the other's soul the love which would endure throughout life.

"‘Samos and safety,’ our former watchword, shall now be changed to ‘Vathy and felicity,’" Harold exclaimed smilingly, as he led Edith back to the princely Mavromatis' house. "Think how glad Ray will be when he learns of the good news! We shall be married at Athens, and he will be best man. Then we can go to Lucerne for our honeymoon."

"You certainly have the marvellous strenuousness of the American!" Edith remarked. "I must add my stubbornness of the Briton, or you will have our house built and furnished before morning."

Harold joined in the laugh, and returned the

warm pressure of his love. They felt that they could not go in to join their friends at present, and therefore walked up and down the quay until nearly midnight. At last, on one of their circuits, they met Professor Lovejoy and Mavromatis, who were glad to see them as they feared that some Samian brigand might have carried them off.

There was no need of explanations or apologies when all were gathered in the drawing-room, for their happy faces spoke for themselves.

Mavromatis and his wife shook Harold's hand smilingly, and then said that every one ought to go to bed. But on the staircase, as Edith was leaning over the banister, and when no one was near, the two sweethearts sealed their love with a kiss, which although not audible, was long and fervent.

The British Vice-consul called early next morning to pay his respects to the English people. He had just received a telegram from the Smyrna Consulate asking him to congratulate the Lovejoys on their return to safety, and to render deepest thanks to Mr. Elpinstone. Harold cut the good man short in his effusive talk, and told him that he was as glad to escape from Ali's band as the Lovejoys, and had simply brought his friends along with him.

Harold then asked the official what news he had

received from Besh Parmak. The man replied that one half of Ali's band had been killed in the first attack, and the rest had been dispersed over the range and plain ; but Ali had been neither killed nor captured.

" These troops are sure to do for him though," the Vice-consul added ; " for their commander has sworn not to leave Asia Minor before he has positive proof of Ali's death, or sees him in prison. The Albanian soldiers also have made a solemn vow to wipe out their score against him in his blood ; and I learn that in the first battle they rushed on him like Japanese. They regard this expedition, not as service to the Government, but as a vendetta, and it is said that they carry with them some part of the body of each brigand they slay. When they return to their mountain hovels they will doubtless add new songs to their crude literature about Ali, and their victory over him."

Harold mused a moment over this news.

" Ali is shrewd and resourceful and may yet escape. I half wish that he might, and yet to what purpose ? "

The Vice-consul now took his leave, and Harold called Edith's father into the garden, and asked him if he approved of the engagement.

"My dear son, I am delighted. You know Greek, and have proved yourself well able to care for Edith," replied the professor. "If only you do not take her entirely away from me, I shall be content. You can, and I am sure will, make her happy; and when I am old and helpless my last days will be spent in peace, for I shall know that she is well provided for."

They then talked of many matters. Harold told his future father-in-law that he had fifty thousand pounds in English Consols, which he would turn over to Edith on their marriage day. The professor showed no interest in this statement.

"I think that I have some property in England which came as my wife's dowry," he observed; "but whether it is worth a hundred or a million pounds I do not know. Edith has charge of my accounts, and you must talk together about all properties. But," he continued, warming up, "I have a library that is of priceless value. Every book in Greek history and literature can be found there, with all the commentaries that have been written by mediaeval, German, French and English scholars. I think that the books are scattered all over the house. When you come to Reading we must arrange them, for I

fear that your orderly instinct will take offence at my negligence."

"Do not believe that I shall revolutionize your way of living, my dear professor," laughed Harold. "It will give me a year of pleasure to look over your books in the first place, and by that time I shall be sure to be well pleased with your arrangement. When I build a house near yours I shall give up half of it to libraries, and we can then discuss the best way of fixing things."

The savant's mind had already entered on a new bent of thought, and he did not listen to Harold's last words. He remembered that Polycrates had been tyrant of Samos, and rushed up to his room to consult his notes.

Harold went into the house to find Edith. She was standing at the window, looking out into the garden. She turned as she heard her lover's step, and looked so happy and rosy that Harold longed to take her into his arms and smother her with kisses. He took her arm silently and led her to the garden, and his face beamed with rapture.

Edith understood every feeling in her lover. The pristine emotions of love, admiration and perfect sympathy were experienced by these simple children of Adam and Eve.

The professor had absently strayed into the garden. He pulled himself erect, and murmured—

“Do I see Pyramus and Thisbe, or is it Edith and Harold? God bless the boy and the girl, and may their lives be blended together in one thought and one purpose!”

The young people sat down close together on a wicker sofa. Harold took Edith's hand, and they talked, Heaven knows what, for many hours. Time and space were forgotten. Mavromatis and his wife walked in and out, but they were not noticed. The professor strolled around in deep thought, with his hands behind his back, walking over flower-beds and gravel-paths alike, perhaps repeating one of Demosthenes' philippics, or impersonating Pericles in Thucydides' funeral oration.

At two o'clock servants came into the garden, and laid a table beneath four spreading palms. Spotless linen covered the board. Heavy silver dishes kept the cloth in place. Mavromatis brought out his best to grace the betrothal lunch. Magnums of champagne were put to cool in silver buckets full of snow, which had been brought from the hoary cap of Samsun Dagh. Old claret, the bottles still cobwebby, sparkled on the table when the sunbeams lit upon them. Roses and orange-blossoms decked the board.

Harold and Edith still sat in their shady nook, dimly conscious of prospective joys, but much engrossed in their future plans. Harold's arm was now around Edith's waist. They had stopped talking for a moment and were simply thinking, when a grizzled man appeared before them dressed in spotless white.

"Ray!" shouted Harold, springing up and clasping him in a close embrace.

"Harold! my dear boy!" was the response.

Edith had risen with Harold, and stood waiting. Her lover took her by the hand, and presented her to Ray.

"My dear lady!" he exclaimed, "I feel that I have not lived in vain. It gives me inexpressible pleasure to see the sweetheart Harold has found. Permit me to kiss your hand."

"No" replied Edith, "I know you too well to suffer such formality. Harold will not be jealous if I kiss you myself," and she drew Ray's head to her lips.

For the second time in his life Ray's eyes became moist. He could only hold the hands of his two friends as he led them to the table.

"The old hypocrite has been unmasked," cried Harold as they met the other members of the house-

hold, "and I present him to you as the dearest, noblest man on God's earth."

Mavromatis shouted "Hear! hear!" and the party sat down to the happiest meal that had ever been served in Samos.

"But why did you come, Ray, you old spy! before you were wanted?" asked Harold.

"You must lay the blame on Mavromatis," answered Ray. "I received a telegram from him this morning before I was up. It had been sent from Vathy after midnight and was marked 'Urgent.' I read it as follows—

"'Good news. Come at once.—MAVROMATIS.'

"I partly guessed what was up, and wanted to be one of the first to congratulate you, so I sent a note to young Payson, with whom I had talked the night before, and went to the quay at sunrise. I found the launch waiting, with your letter and Mustapha. While my man was getting up steam I read your letter, and noted the words under-scored '*Edith Lovejoy*.'

"I sent a man with Mustapha to my office, with a note to my cashier to give him anything he wanted. I arrived here, but you were too selfishly engaged to meet me. Mavromatis hurried me to my room, where I bathed. While I was dressing

Mavromatis told me the good news. I was so glad that I nearly threw him out of the window. I peeped into the garden from time to time, but had not the heart to interrupt your *tête-à-tête*: but I could not wait always to proffer my congratulations, so at last I planted myself before you, and you were civilized enough not to murder me."

All laughed at Ray's talk, and then set themselves to do justice to Mavromatis' collation. The good Greek beamed with gratitude and hospitality. Dainties were served one after the other; the wines flowed freely: for although Edith barely touched her glass with her lips, and the professor drank sparingly, the other men celebrated the event with fervency. Moreover, the food and the champagne were so perfect that laugh and banter transformed the hours into moments.

At last Ray took his glass and stood up—

"Long years of health and perfect happiness to Harold and Edith!"

Glasses were touched and the prosperity of the lovers was duly drunk.

Harold now rose and toasted Ray—

"Here's luck to good old Ray! to a loving and tireless friend! to a secret doer of good deeds! to a true and loyal Englishman!"

Even Edith departed from her usual abstinence.

The friends now left the table, and Ray invited Edith and Harold to go for a sail in the launch on the bay. He wanted to get the two young people apart with him, that he might see them more intimately, and find out about their plans.

Easy-chairs were placed on the after-deck, and the launch started from the quay at five o'clock. They sat in silence for a time, enjoying the beautiful view of the city.

Edith sat in the centre, with Ray on her right, while Harold still held his guardian place on her left. The lovely bay of Vathy encompassed them at first, the background of hills rising in terraces around, where patches of vineyards and olive orchards variegated the dull brown. The sun declined from moment to moment, and tried to peep under the canopy of canvas, to see who these white-clad beings were; but Ray had provided against his inquisitiveness, and the party sat in coolness and comfort.

"Ray, we are going to be married at Athens next week, and you must be best man." Harold broke the silence with this information.

"All right," answered Ray; "since you have bearded Ali I suppose that you will take no denial

from a paltry Englishman. But what is Edith to do for a bridesmaid? Will you break into some convent, and carry off some Greek girl?"

Edith smiled at the idea.

"I should not wish to jeopardize our safety by adopting any such radical measure," she said, "although I have no doubt that Harold would do it if it seemed necessary. I met a charming American girl in Athens when we stopped there in the spring, and I am sure that she will be willing to help us out. Harold has already telegraphed to Paris for my trousseau, which I hope will be ready for me when I reach Greece. I implored him to wait two weeks longer, but he declared you were so busy that it would be ruin for you to be away from Smyrna more than ten days, and of course we cannot be married without you."

"What a base deceiver Harold is!" remarked Ray. "You will have to watch him carefully when you are married. He will be using me as a scape-goat all the time. You will be getting presents continually from Ray; when he wishes you to take some pleasure trip, it will be Ray that is worked to death, and you must both go to meet him. You will have to forbid him to use my name."

"As if!" interposed Edith. "I shall use it as

often as Harold does. You must take a vacation after a month, and come to England. I am sure you will have business to attend to in London, or you ought to have. Promise me you will come."

Ray smiled broadly and answered—

"You young people will ruin me in body and goods. Here you take me away from my business for a week when everything is at sixes and sevens, and drag me all over the Aegean: and then, not satisfied with that, you want me to rush off to the fogs of England. Well, I won't promise just when, but I will certainly run over and see you before long."

The launch turned back for Samos now, and the trio had the mainland of Asia before them. A cool land breeze fanned their cheeks, and sent little rippling waves to race with the boat.

Ray had brought Harold's banjo with him, and as they sat with their faces to the east, and watched the sun's dying glow creep up the slopes of Mycale, Harold played "Home, sweet Home," with a light and masterful touch. The music had a new meaning for him now; and Edith's eyes glistened with happiness as she listened. When he had finished Edith remarked she had always thought

the banjo a harsh and unmusical instrument, but now she admired it.

"You ought to hear the Southern negroes play it," replied Harold. "They are natural-born musicians, and their mellow voices and twanging banjos are worth crossing the ocean to hear."

Ray was so pleased with the singing that he ordered the captain to go at quarter speed, and so the launch glided slowly along, while Harold sang softly one Darky song after another. He finished with that most popular of all, the dear old "Way down upon the Swanee Ribber." Both Edith and Ray knew the words, and the three sang the good old song in a low tone, while Harold picked out the chords on his banjo.

It was now twilight. The propeller was revolving slowly and making no noise. The hills of the island appeared dimly on the left, and a few lights glimmered along the shore. Harold stopped playing, and put his hand on Edith's. She took it in her own, and the three sat musing. Good old Ray was happier than he had been since childhood.

The day had been a perfect one in joy ; festivity had marked its noon, and quiet and bliss its eve. While Edith and Harold dreamed of the future Ray followed their thoughts, and his unselfish

nature shared in their rapture. He pictured their happy home, and looked forward to the pleasure he would have in visiting them, and seeing them grow up together. He even thought of the time when he might retire from business and build a house near by ; and so, as the launch glided into the harbour, perfect happiness crept into their hearts, and the peace and beauty of the night seemed to pronounce a holy benediction over the betrothed and their equally happy friend.

CHAPTER XIII

EPILOGUE

HAROLD received a letter from Ray some weeks after the marriage. They had returned to England, and were sitting in the garden of the Professor's house, when a servant delivered the message. It was written from Smyrna—

“MY DEAR HAROLD AND EDITH,—

“I suppose you are too much occupied with each other to think about your former friend Ray, and you have doubtless forgotten that there is such a place as Smyrna in the world; but I am going to write you a long letter nevertheless, and try to make some place in your thoughts.

“After the wedding I returned to Smyrna, and found matters comparatively quiet. The English fleet has left, but its visit has had a very salutary effect. Farkouh Pasha has been exiled to Tripoli, and there is some prospect that brigandage may be put down, for the moment at least.

“ Ali Effendi has not been captured. He was surrounded several times, but succeeded in each case in cutting his way out. His band has dwindled to three or four men. No one seems to know where he is now. The troops followed him to the Plain of Melissa, and there lost him. He may have gone to Cyprus, or to Crete, your former home. His younger wife is here in Smyrna, and has been imploring the Vali Pasha and other officials to respect the pardon granted him by the Government; but these good men are powerless. A commission was sent from the capital to uproot the brigands, and it has been given supreme authority. It is said that our Vali is to be replaced.

“ Mustapha is now cultivating a fine vineyard in the Sokia plain, with which I presented him in your name, and Sakli has been given lucrative employment by my agent at Aidin.

“ You are at present the hero of this district, Harold; for although the newspapers are not allowed to publish anything about your experiences, yet ‘murder will out.’ If you ever return here you will have a regular ovation.

“ Your business is going on all right. For convenience sake, I moved your clerks into my office, and so can look after your work while doing my own.

There is an enormous crop of figs this year and prices are low. Raisins on the other hand are scarce and high. I will see that your orders are filled, and hope to turn out a good profit for you. You will need money now that you are a 'pater-familias,' for you must save your Consol fortune for your children.

"If through some mistake you should name one of your sons Ray, be sure that he will not need to sit at the door with his father's old rifle to keep the wolf of hunger away.

"I hope, my dear boy, that when you have rested a bit you will go in for something worth your while : take up some profession, run for Parliament, or go into business. You have ability—I can say it safely at this distance. You have a wife who will sympathize with you in all your endeavours, and who is able to aid you when judgment and intuition are needed.

"As for myself I believe I am under the hypnotism of the Levant. I confess I am under the influence of the indefinable charm which permeates this atmosphere. I would go to England to see you, my best and only friends; but I would not like to think of living there. True friendship is a God-given gift, and is seldom vouchsafed more than

once or twice in any life. I would willingly leave this heavenly climate, these blessed *inbats*, this *dolce far niente* life, this fascinating mixture of the Occident and the Orient, to live near you, but had not this blessed boon of friendship entered my life, the premiership of England or the presidency of the United States would never have lured me from my old haunts.

“ You remember what Bryon wrote of this country, as he sat under the cypresses at the “ Tarlah,” in Boudja.

Where all save the spirit of man is divine.

And you know, Harold, that ‘ the spirit of man ’ is not obtrusively conspicuous in Smyrna, in Boudja, in Bournabat.

“ Better come back to the Levant, my best friends ; change your names if necessary. Bring the professor along, with a firman to excavate at Sardis, or Pergamos, or Ephesus. He will be a complete Levantine within six months. See how our good friend Lavy still lives here ; see how the American consuls settle down here when they have been recalled ; see how the chicks of the numberless families remain here ; and how the Lerauds, the Byrons, and the Americans marry Levantine

wives, and take care that no 'race-suicide' be imputed against them.

"You see that I wax warm when I write of friendship, or the Levant, for these are my favourite topics. I can never speak fluently, but I can write, like my Canadian friend Wirkwood, until my stock of note-paper runs out. I feel lonely when you are not here, Harold and Edith; I feel homesick when I am not in Smyrna.

"I wonder if you have thrown the whole letter into the fire before now. I am writing in front of Cromer's, on the quay; the cool evening breeze refreshes me. You are probably huddling under a fog before an open fireplace. I have a bottle, or possibly more, of the delicious Pilsener beer before me. I am smoking the "Régie première" cigarettes. Ah! I have you there, Harold, for you are probably drinking *tea*, a tonic for consumptives; and smoking an odoriferous pipe, which Edith patiently suffers.

"I have just looked at my watch, it is two o'clock. The lights still flare on the Smyrna quay, and music yet inspires the breezes. Mavromatis has just come, for I have transplanted him from Samos to Smyrna. I tell him I am writing to you, and he sends you his best compliments.

"Well, this letter, I am afraid, has already proved

altogether too long, so I will end it by telling you that I have engaged a state-room on the *Messageries, Saghalien*, sailing from Smyrna for Marseilles on September 1. "I shall arrive at the station in Reading at noon on the 7th. Do not leave me to grope my way to your domicile, as I was forced to do in days gone by at Vathy.

"Your friend,

"RAY."

Harold danced with Edith round the garden. The professor blinked out from his study, and was told the good news. "Really," he exclaimed, "we must prepare a decent reception for this noble man. I am sure you will see to it, Edith and Harold," and he dived head foremost into his study again, and blotted the page he had just written.



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